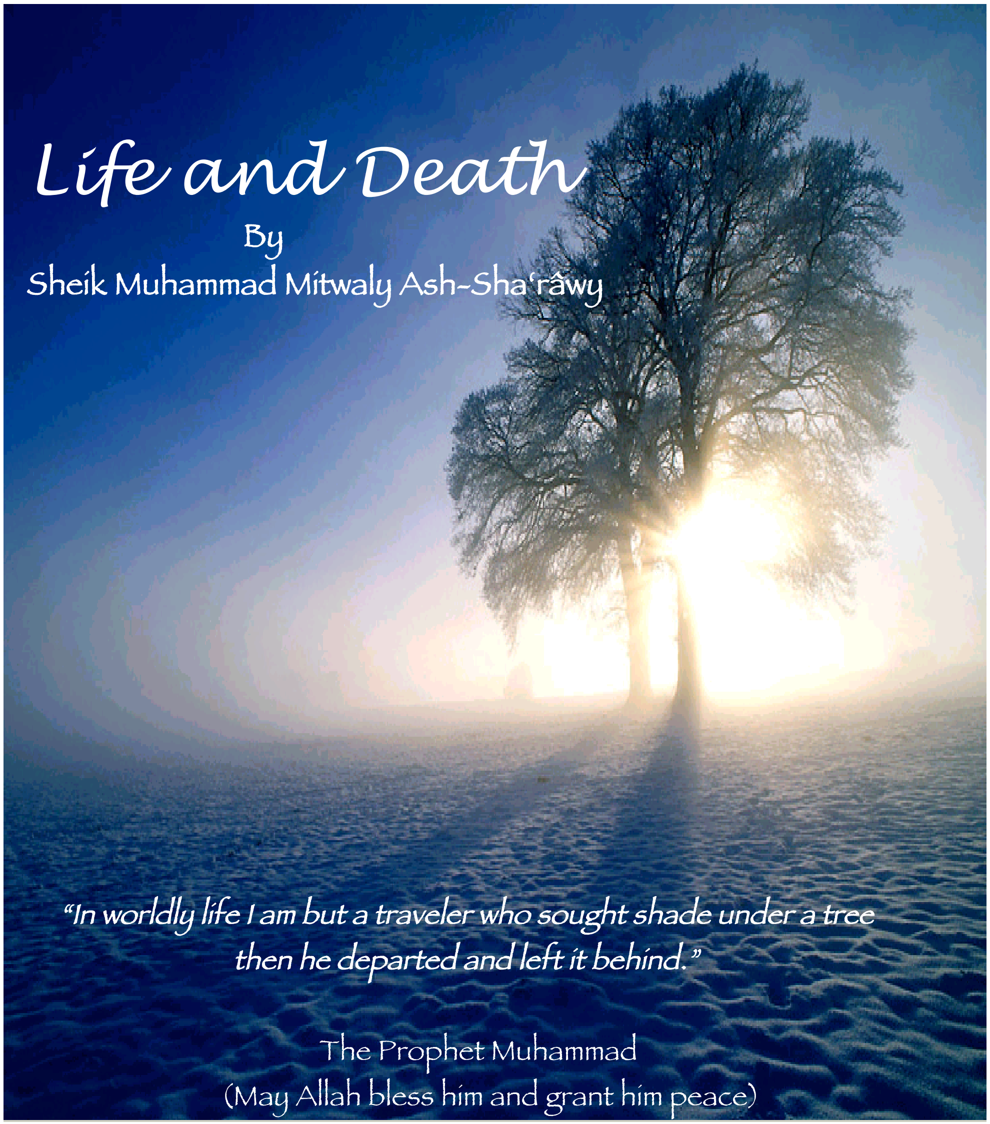


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In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent,
the Most Merciful

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Dedication

Life & Death

After praising Allah and praying for the bestowal of blessings and peace upon our master, the Messenger of Allah, Muhammad, I beg Allah that these issuing books from my library be a step taken on the path of guidance and a light that may illumine the way towards Faith and we pray for guidance and success from Allah.

Muhammad Mitwaly Ash-Sha'râwy

Introduction

The Islamic library of the venerable Sheik Ash-Sha'râwy
Life and Death

This book...

In the journey of ever continuous giving of the venerable Imam, Sheik Muhammad Mitwaly Al-Sha'râwy, are shining lights and inspirations that illumine the way of the seekers, guide the astray and teach humanity the religious matters that have been kept hidden from it.

Done for the Love of Allah, the Prophet Muhammad (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) and Islam by 'Abdullah translation group and as homage paid to our venerable Imam, Sheik Muhammad Mitwaly Ash-Sha'râwy.

Chapter One

What Was The Beginning?

No issue has ever raised more controversy among people as that of life and death. And no issue the scientists have ever meddled in by introducing unveracious knowledge as the issue of life and death! This is because death is a metaphysical matter to us, and we should seek the knowledge and characteristics of whatever is unknown only from Allah, all praise and glory be to Him. For as long as it is invisible it should not be definitely included in the knowledge man possesses. Still, it is incorporated based on mere hypothesis and illusions, which subjects it to many forged lies.

That is what misled the scientists – since the beginning of creation – and made them suffer a state of confusion, loss, even contrariety. Some of them adopted the theory of evolution; alleging that man has descended from an ape called 'Lucy'!

To such liars we say: *'Who told you so?'* None of the historical records that narrated to us the world events since most ancient times informed us that a monkey once turned to a human! Did this monkey turn to a human being then such a transformation process stopped? Or what did truly happen? Furthermore, did this monkey turn to a male or a female human being! If it has turned to a male, it would extinct. The end is the same if it has turned to a female. And where is the evidence they have relied on to make such a judgment?!

The different branches of sciences and scientific researches have witnessed extensive development in all domains, on a scale definitely incomparable to the means available during old ages. Technology has become the main trend of the modern age. But still we are challenging

them, in spite of all this, to prove their claims substantially; show us how the monkey could turn to a human?!

Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has informed us of such forged lies in His Noble Book (the Noble Qur'an) and warned us against them saying (what means):

"I (Allah) made them (*Iblîs* and his offspring) not to witness (nor took their help in) the creation of the heavens and the earth and not (even) their own creation, nor was I (Allah) to take the misleaders as helpers." (Al-Kahf, 18: 51)

Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has told us that there would come misleaders who would speak about the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the creation of people, and how they happened? The sole aim behind the falsehood uttered by such misleaders is to lead people astray. They have never witnessed the creation of the heavens and the earth, nor their own creation to be able to speak about it knowledgably.

The emergence of such misleaders who claim that man evolved from a monkey, and those who maintained scientific theories about human creation, is itself a substantiating poof of the question of Faith in the universe. For if they had not come and misled people, we would have said that Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has informed us in the Noble Qur'an that there would come misleaders who would tell us that the heavens and the earth were created in such and such fashion, that man was created in such and such fashion but they came not. Hence, their appearance is a must, for strengthening Faith.

A fruitless debate and sophistry

Mankind was at a loss with respect to a trivial philosophical dilemma for which they had no proof; the dilemma of what was born first the egg or the chicken? Such an issue aroused many fruitless debates, and schools after schools were founded discussing such a topic. In reply to them all, we say, 'No need for such sophistry, Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has saved us (from such a maze) and pointed to us how the very beginning of creation was.' Allah, The Most Exalted, says (what means):

"And of everything We have created pairs, that you may remember (the Grace of Allah)."(Az-Zâriyât, 51: 49)

In the light of the knowledge we gain from Almighty Allah, the glorious Qur'anic verse means that no creation can subsist unless through a male and a female. So, that fruitless debate, and that scientific nonsense (so to speak) are worthless. Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has told us that He has created of everything pairs. Therefore, without the hen, which fertilizes the egg inside the womb of the chicken, the egg will remain unfertilized and will yield nothing.

Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has willed that the process of creation be of four stages. Each stage is considered to be an indication of the Divine Inimitability of Allah and His endless Power. The Prophet Adam (peace be upon him) was the first created human being, as indicated by the noble Qur'anic verse in which The Truth [*Al-Haqq*: one of the Beautiful Names of Allah], Blessed and Exalted be He, says (what means):

"(Remember) when your Lord said to the angels: 'Truly, I am going to create man from clay'. So when I have fashioned him and breathed into him (his) soul created by Me, then you fall down prostrate to him."(Sâd, 38: 71-72)

That was the beginning of creation as Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has informed us. By breathing the soul that Allah created into Adam, He originated in the loin of Adam (peace be upon him) all his offspring till the Day of Resurrection, having the form of very minute creatures written on them by a Divine code all the characteristics of the human being. This is the creation Allah, The Exalted and Ever-Majestic, has revealed to us in the Noble Qur'an, saying (what means):

"And (remember) when your Lord brought forth from the Children of Adam, from their loins, their seed (or from Adam's loin his offspring) and made them testify as to themselves (saying): 'Am I not your Lord?' They said: 'Yes! We testify,' lest you should say on the Day of Resurrection: 'Verily, we have been unaware of this.' Or lest you should say: 'It was only our fathers afortime who took others as partners in worship along with Allah, and we were (merely their) descendants after them; will You then destroy us because of the deeds of men who practised *Al-Bâtil* (i.e. polytheism and committing crimes and sins, invoking and worshipping others besides Allah)?'" (Al-A'râf, 7: 172-173)

Some people may wonder saying, 'What relates me to the Prophet Adam (peace be upon him) after the passage of all those long centuries?' To them we say: In you there is a trace of the soul Allah has breathed into Adam (peace be upon him), which granted you life. Still, they ask, 'How?' We say that life is a continuous chain, if severed it would end. You were brought into being through a spermatozoon from you father, and unless your father existed you would not have been born. And your father is brought into being owing to a precedent life, which is your grandfather's life. So, you exist as a result of another life that preceded your own and your grandfather also existed as a result of another preceding life and so on. This way, the chain of life continues till it is traced back to Adam (peace be upon him). It means if Adam (peace be upon him) did not come to life first, his offspring would not have existed. His offspring

has obtained life from a spermatozoon in the loin of Adam (peace be upon him). From the life of Adam (peace be upon him) his offspring has obtained life and in turn transmitted it to their posterities.

Life proceeded thus, just as Allah has willed for it, until it passed to us and would pass to our children and our grandsons till the Last Hour is established.

Witnessing Allah in the immaterial existence

From the beginning Allah made all His creatures witness Him *(and made them testify that He is their Lord)*, and none of mankind whether from the previous or future generations failed to witness Him. Unless mankind witnessed their lord they would not have been able to comprehend the question of belief in the Unseen, and on top of it, belief in the Presence of Allah. Why? Because the human mind cannot grasp the meaning of abstract things, except by witnessing them.

You would not realize what does 'a mountain' mean, unless you really saw or climbed a mountain; similarly, you would not realize what does 'a lake' mean, unless you beheld it or saw a picture of it. Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has not been seen by any human being and no mind can ever grasp Him. Nevertheless, when the Name of Allah is mentioned, you find no difficulty in understanding the meaning. That He is the Omnipotent Power that has created, originated, maintained, and provided everything. Also in worshipping Allah, you feel your heart is overwhelmed with serenity. All this proves that Allah has made us witness Him in the immaterial existence at the creation of Adam (peace be upon him). We also know that He is Omnipresent and is The Creator of everything. This is what we call the instinct of true faith.

We are all born having a pure instinct of monotheistic faith that fills our souls and hearts, and attracts us to The Supreme Creator. Each baby is born with such an instinct, as the Hadith of the Prophet

Muhammad (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) says, '***Every child is born with a true faith of Islam (i.e. to worship none but Allah Alone) but his parents convert him to Judaism, Christianity or Magainism***.'

Forms of the creation of mankind

We return to the forms of the creation of mankind, which are four:

The first is the creation without a male and a female; that is to say directly by Allah without causes, which is the creation of Adam (peace be upon him).

The second is the creation from a male only, that is the creation of Hawwa (Eve, may Allah be pleased with her) who has been created from the rib of Adam (peace be upon him), as the Noble Qur'an has told us in the verse in which Allah, The Truth, Blessed and Exalted be He, says (what means):

"O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from a single person (Adam), and from him (Adam) He created his wife [Hawwa (Eve)], and from them both He created many men and women and fear Allah through Whom you demand your mutual (rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the wombs (kinship). Surely, Allah is Ever an All-Watcher over you." (An-Nisâ', 4: 3)

The third is the creation from a male and a female, which takes place by the Will of Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, and by causations.

The causative factors behind the third form of creation is the presence of a male and a female, but the Absolute Power of Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, made such factors not function independently, but through the Will of The Causer and Originator. So, a man may

marry a woman, and both have all the causative factors for having children, but they never do, owing to the Will of Allah that towers highly above all causes. Recite the noble Qur'anic verse in which Allah, The Most Exalted, says (what means):

"To Allah belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. He creates what He wills. He bestows female (offspring) upon whom He wills, and bestows male (offspring) upon whom He wills. Or He bestows both males and females, and He renders barren whom He wills. Verily, He is the All-Knower and is Able to do all things."(Ash-Shûra, 42: 49-50)

It is to understand well that even with the presence of the causative factors, represented in the male and female, reproduction may never occur, save by the Divine Will and the absolute Power of Allah. Thus, the union of a male and female may produce no offspring, because it is not a mechanical process that completely depends on man, for the Will of The Originator reigns supreme over all causes.

To complete the forms of creation comes the fourth kind, which is the creation of Îesâ, (Jesus, peace be upon him), son of Maryum (Mary, may Allah be pleased with her) who has been created from a female only, without the male factor, whereby the four miracles of creation are perfected: creation without either a male or a female, creation from a male without a female, creation with the union of both, and creation from a female without a male. These are the four forms of creation.

Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has originated two different stages to be undergone by His Creation: life and death. Life is one of the Creations of Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, as well as death.

The Truth, all praise and glory be to Him, says (what means):

"Who has created death and life, that He may test you which of you is best in deed."(Al-Mulk, 67: 2)

Each of these two stages (life and death) is governed by certain laws, about which we do not know but the very least that Allah, Blessed and Exalted be He, has imparted to us. Nevertheless, through this quite insignificant knowledge, we generalize our concepts concerning life and death.

Some people assume that nothing exists in this world beyond what we really see in everyday life, though those who endorse such sayings do die and come back to life everyday. In a second, they unconsciously move from one law of existence to another. The Truth, Blessed and Exalted be He, says (what means):

"It is Allah Who takes away the souls at the time of their death, and those that die not during their sleep. He keeps those (souls) for which He has ordained death and sends the rest for a term appointed. Verily, in this are signs for a people who think deeply." (Az-Zumar, 39:42)

Laws of life and death

When man goes to sleep he moves from one law of existence to another. While awake he is governed by certain laws; he sees material matters and proceeds with the daily activities of life depending on his mental power. This is the present world visible to man, the world that all mankind share. Nevertheless, when we go to sleep, we move to another world, a world that does not submit neither to reason, logic nor the laws of worldly life. We move out of the wheel of time. So, man cannot tell how long he has slept without resorting to an instrument for measuring time or natural phenomena. As when he sleeps by day and awakes to find it dark or sleeps by night, then the

sunlight shines forth. Unless he depends on such means he will never know how long he has slept.

Sleep removes man from the realms of this life, thus he neither perceives it nor knows anything about it. He becomes completely separated from it. And as he becomes detached from the events of life, he becomes also detached from its laws. In dreams, man sees things, while his eyes are closed. He may feel as if he is running while his legs lie on bed unmoved. In dreams, he may also fall from a high mountain without being injured, and he may see himself flying or sinking into the ground. Moreover, while asleep, man remains sensible so he may laugh, cry, or have a nightmare that makes him shout or rouse from sleep scared. Hence, man during sleep submits neither to reason, logic, nor the laws that govern our daily life. For instance, if you said to someone that you went to America and returned twenty times in one night, could he belie you? The answer is no. And if you told him that in your dreams you talked to so and so, who has died long ago, could he belie you? Again the answer is no.

What are the laws of sleep?

As we have mentioned previously during sleep, man submits to certain laws, that science can never discover. People agreed upon excluding whatever man sees while asleep from debatable laws. None can argue the reasonability of dreams, no matter how illogical they sounded or how deep they delved into the realms of the incredible.

Different psychological schools have tried hard to find a reasonable interpretation for what man sees in his dreams, but they all failed. In spite of the great achievements of psychology, all that has been achieved in this field is just mere guesswork and assumptions that never reached the truth.

Science has indicated that the maximum time during which the human mind is active while sleeping is seventeen seconds only. Nevertheless, man may see dreams that need an hour or more to be narrated.

Such kind of transmission from one law to another happens to all of us. Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, being merciful to our minds, wanted to let us know that when man goes to sleep, he moves to the death world, and when he awakes, Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, restores his soul to him, but why? So that man realizes that he can move from one law of existence to another, and another. Therefore, when man is informed that he is going to be immortalized in the Hereafter, we should understand that he is going to be governed by other laws, and thus never wonder.

But how can man be immortal? Through a life governed by its special laws to which man shall submit.

Thus, each of us unconsciously moves from one law to another every night, then by the Power of Allah, we come back to the first law of life that governs us while awake, and then we sleep to move to another law.

I do not think that any of those who professes to have knowledge can tell us what are the laws to which man submits during sleep, or how can he see while his eyes are closed! Or how can he run while his legs are motionless! Or how can he travel when he has not left his place!

Hence, man possesses other hidden faculties, we are unaware of, that function during sleep; and there are laws unknown to us which man passes through during his life journey.

The beginning of life

Many scientists have tried hard to depict for us how life started on earth, introducing many visions: as claiming that it has started with a unicellular creature and then the cell has undergone fission and developments, and so forth.

In answering them, we say that we are given life only by The One Who has created us, and the creator of a thing is the only one from whom we should seek an interpretation. Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, The Creator, has informed us that he has created man from the clay of the earth. The modern science, which Allah has revealed to His creatures, has lately proved that this clay is composed of eighteen elements, all found in the human body.

The proportions of such elements may vary from one person to another. In some bodies, iron, magnesium or calcium can be less than other elements. Such deficiency can be discovered through modern chemical analyses, and then the doctor prescribes the medicine that compensates such kind of shortage. But in every body there always exists eighteen elements.

Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has informed us that He created man from clay and pottery clay of altered black smooth mud, as the noble Qur'anic verse states (what means):

"(Remember) when your Lord said to the angels: 'Truly, I am going to create man from clay'." (Sâd, 38:71)

And the noble Qur'anic verse saying (what means):

"And (remember) when your Lord said to the angels: 'I am going to create a man (Adam) from sounding clay of altered black smooth mud. So, when I have fashioned him completely and breathed into him (Adam) the soul which I created for him, then

fall (you) down prostrating yourselves unto him.'" (Al-Hijr, 15: 28-29)

Thus, Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has specified to us the composing elements of the human body and the stages of creation. When a metaphysical issue is tackled Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, out of mercifulness to our minds, approximates the meaning by setting forth examples from palpable realties. We have not witnessed the process of creation, but we do witness death everyday, it is a matter we all see.

Indeed, the destruction of anything is the opposite of its construction. For instance, if you are erecting a building you start by constructing the first floor and end up by the last floor. But in destruction you start by the last floor. Also, when traveling to Alexandria, your last destination would be Alexandria. But if you wanted to return, your first place of departure would be Alexandria. Hence, death happens contrarily to life, because it destroys it.

The last thing that enters man's body is the soul, as Allah, glory be to Him, has told us. It is also the first thing to depart the body. Afterwards, man's body hardens, and becomes just like the hardened pottery clay of altered black smooth mud, then the body decomposes and becomes just like argil. Then water separates from mud; the water goes down the earth, and the mud turns to dust. That is the truth stated by the Noble Qur'an that death comes to bear witness to it.

Man desires to know what is Death? But we advice him first to know what is life? What inspires life in your body is the soul, which is a creature within you, though invisible to you. You perceive the soul neither by its shape nor figure, but rather by its effect, as it is the thing that inspires sense in you and endows you with life.

Bestowal of life in the soul

Where is that soul? Is it in your mind that thinks? Or in your hands wherewith you hold? Or in your heart that beats with life? Or in your feet wherewith you walk? Where is it? And how does it look like? Actually, nobody knows.

So, if you were unable to reveal the hidden secret of one of the Creations of Allah that exists inside your body, would you be able then to reveal the secret of the whole creation? That is impossible.

We hope that you first discover the secret within your own self and being, before passing your judgment on the entire humanity. But if you failed to unveil one of the Secrets of the Creations of Allah that He has placed inside your body, would you be able to reveal the Secrets of Allah in His Universe? The answer is that you would not be able to, but man is defiant and tries to interfere in what surpasses the capacities of the human mind.

The human mind is bounded by set limits; its task is to choose between alternatives in life and to differentiate the good from the evil. Man is created having the power of free choice, and his mind is the tool of realizing it. Nevertheless, by the power of this mind, man can never go beyond what Allah has decreed to remain hidden or unseen.

Existence … and the perception of existence

Philosophers have strained their minds trying to discover what is beyond the matter. But they did not pose for a moment to question themselves about what has inspired in them the belief that there is something beyond the matter? It is the believing human instinct that says so, because it realizes and perceives that there exist things

beyond the matter. But could its secret be attained by the human intellect?

The answer is, 'No,' unless Allah, all glory be to Him, willed to reveal to His servants one of the secrets of His Universe. In every generation, Allah, all glory be to Him, reveals one of the secrets of this universe, which humanity has never known before. If a scientist happens to be after that secret, Allah may reveal it to him. If not, Allah may reveal it to us through what we call *the precept of coincidence*. Actually, that precept is an imaginary one and only exists in the human mind.

This universe together with all its destinies and incidents, whether trivial or grand, is meticulously arranged by Allah, all glory be to Him, one incident after the other; nothing whatsoever is hidden from Him no matter how petty it is, and nothing in this universe happens except by His Will. Indeed, a solemn sign of the Grandeur of Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, is that He has recorded all the events to happen in the universe from the beginning of creation till the Day of Resurrection in a Book before creation took place. Recite the noble Qur'anic verse in which Allah, all glory be to Him, says (what means):

"No calamity befalls on the earth or in yourselves but is inscribed in the Book of Decrees (Al-Lauh Al-Mahfûz), before We bring it into existence. Verily, that is easy for Allah." (Al-Hadîd, 57: 22)

And the noble Qur'anic verse in which Allah, all glory be to Him, says (what means):

"And with Him are the keys of the Ghaib (all that is hidden), none knows them but He. And He knows whatever there is in (or on) the earth and in the sea; not a leaf falls, but he knows it. There is not a grain in the darkness of the earth nor anything fresh or dry, but is written in a Clear Record." (Al-An'âm, 6: 59)

The fact that Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has recorded all the events to take place in the universe means that there is no such thing as coincidence. But rather everything happens according to a highly accurate order and exquisite organization. Thus, nothing happens by chance, but owing to our inability to perceive the secrets of existence we claim that events happen by coincidence.

Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, gradually reveals to the mind, from the secrets of the universe, what we have never known before, but certainly have existed before we became aware of them. Therefore, there is a difference between actual existence and the perception of existence. Millions of things exist around us, performing their role in life, but though we benefit from them we do not perceive their existence. Allah, all glory be to Him, willed to inform us that there exists million of things that perform their role in the universe even if we have not known them before. Moreover, our unawareness of them does not signify that they do not exist.

Briefly, we sum up what we have detailed in this chapter: Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has caused life to be from a male and a female, thus of everything Allah has created pairs. Second, reproduction does not take place by one gender but by two, and the Absolute Power of Allah is unbound by causes.

Afterwards, we have illustrated that life has continued as a chain since the creation of the Prophet Adam (peace be upon him) till the Day of Resurrection, moving from a living human being to another, but when seized by death it shall stop.

Then, we have illustrated that man can never unveil the secret of life or the beginning of creation and how it occurred, because he never witnessed it. Furthermore, if man failed to discover one secret of his body, which is the soul, how can he aspire to know the secret behind the creation of the entire universe?

Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has not made the mind the means to learn the secret of life, but the mind is to mediate on the Signs of Allah in His universe; to absolutely realize that Allah, all glory be to Him, is the Creator of this universe. So, when comes to man a Messenger of Allah conveying His Divine Law, he should hail him with belief, but regretfully man has hailed him with disbelief, we seek the Refuge of Allah from it (disbelief).

When we desire to know the secret of life and death we must seek its knowledge only from Allah, Who has created life and death. Everyday we move from life to death when we go to sleep, and from death back to life when we wake up, but we are heedless of that owing to our negligence and weakness. Nevertheless, man definitely submits in his life at least to two laws: that of wakefulness and that of sleep.

But what is life? That is what we shall discuss, by the Will and Help of Allah, in the next chapter.

Chapter 2

What Is Life?

In our attempt to know the meaning of life we have to bear in mind that Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has not restricted life to mankind and jinn alone, but life extends to every spot in this universe. We deem life as being only sense and motion. Actually, life means that everything performs its role in this universe.

We judge that man is living because he moves, walks, and talks. We also judge that animals are living because they move and feel. Furthermore, we say that plants are living because they breathe. As for the rest of the universe, we believe that it is lifeless, which is untrue, but how can that be?

The concept of life in this universe entirely differs from our own. In fact, the species of the universe are classified into four: inanimate beings, plants, animals and mankind. Every species among the aforementioned serves the other and does not surpass its special characteristics.

For instance, inanimate beings serve plants, animals and mankind. Its last distinguishing characteristic is growth, which we perceive in the coral reeves within seas. They grow in spite of the fact that growth is not among the distinctive characteristics of inanimate beings. But every species among the species of the universe has higher classes that cease and end where begin the distinctive characteristics of the species succeeding it. Inanimate beings stop in their development at the characteristics of growth, which are the first to distinguish plants. Naturally, plants start with growth and stop at sensation, but there is a

plant that senses like the mimosa; the coy lady as countrymen calls it. It is a flower when you approach with your finger folds its leaves.

As for animals, they start with sense till the more advanced classes among them verge on the basics of reason, instinctively formed in them. Thus, we find that some of the advanced breeds of monkeys are able to mimic man, but with neither understanding nor by heredity.

Man can train animals on performing some games that involve some sort of primitive thinking. But animals do not inherit such skills. Meaning, the monkey that learned to jump over the hurdles would not give birth to a monkey that could do the same without training. It ascertains that all the acts that the trained animals perform are individually acquired skills.

Afterwards comes man, the master of the universe, whom Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has distinguished by the power of reason in order for him to mediate on the Universe of Allah, to comprehend the Signs of Allah, and to pursue His Course, all praise and glory be to Him.

We consider inanimate beings as having neither life nor motion, and we do not heed the fact that their duty in life dictates so. On contemplating the Qur'anic Statement of The Almighty inscribed in His Noble Book, which falsehood cannot come to it from before it or behind it, that says (what means):

"Everything will perish save His Face." (Al-Qasas, 28: 88)

We will realize for sure that all that is called a thing in this universe will perish on the Day the Trumpet will be blown. Since Allah, praise be to Him, has said (everything) will perish then everything has life in it, because perishing, as we have already said, is the opposite of life or its antithesis. Recite the noble Qur'anic verse in which Allah, all glory be to Him, says (what means):

“So that those who were to be destroyed (for their rejecting the Faith) might be destroyed after a clear evidence, and those who were to live (i.e. believers) might live after a clear evidence.” (Al-Anfâl, 8: 42)

This noble Qur’anic verse shows us that destruction opposes life. When Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, says (part of the Qur’anic verse that means): “*Everything will perish.*” (Al-Qasas, 28: 88), it means that ‘everything’ that have lived would be destroyed, save (what is done for the sake of) the Honorable Face of Allah, all praise be to Him**.**

We approach life based on its being sense and motion only, because we are measuring it compared to ourselves, but life has to be measured based on the role that everything plays in this universe. Inanimate beings have a (form of) life that suits them, whereas plants have a (form of) life that suits them and animals have a (form of) life that suits them. So, there subsists a truth that bears neither ambiguity nor controversy, that those things celebrate the Glory of Allah, The Almighty, as verified by the noble Qur’anic verse in which Allah, glory be to Him, says (what means):

“There is not a moving (living) creature on earth, nor a bird that flies with its two wings, but are communities like you. We have neglected nothing in the Book, then unto their Lord they (all) shall be gathered.” (Al-An‘âm, 6: 38)

And the noble Qur’anic verse in which Allah, all glory be to Him, says (what means):

“And there is not a thing but glorifies His Praise. But you understand not their glorification.” (Al-Isrâ’, 17: 44)

Let us start with inanimate beings. They have a (form of) life that suits their task, even if we do not understand it. We see inanimate beings before us still, motionless, but is it their reality?

While in school, they used to teach us how to magnetize iron, meaning, to make it magnetic. We used to bring a tube containing some iron filings, and then we used to bring a magnet and pass it over them unidirectionally. Consequently, we find that the iron filings have changed their movement and were regulated in one row, thus becoming magnetized. This process, in which the iron particles have moved, occurs in every iron bar over which we pass a magnet in one direction. This simple process, which we have noticed in (the iron filings) is the same that occurs when passing a magnet over an iron bar, even if we fail to notice it because of the iron bulk and its cohesiveness.

Inanimate beings cry, hear and talk

Hence, there is motion in inanimate beings, which the eye fails to notice and we know nothing about. But it occurs in order for inanimate beings to carry out their role in life as a living entity, not as dead inanimate objects. We assume that there is not life in inanimate beings, but those inanimate beings we claim to be lifeless have sentiments we are unaware of. Recite the Qur'anic Statement of The Truth, all praise and glory be to Him, (which means):

"And the heavens and the earth wept not for them, nor were they given a respite." (Ad-Dukhân, 44: 29)

Indeed, the heavens and the earth have sentiments. They cry and perhaps laugh, even if we do not perceive it and think them inanimate, neither sense nor cry. The heavens and the earth can also hear the Words of Allah, understand them and answer them, as the Lord of

Majesty and Sovereignty, all praise and glory be to Him, has told us in His Noble Book, (what means):

"Then He Istawâ (rose over) towards the heaven when it was smoke, and said to it and to the earth: 'Come both of you willingly or unwillingly.' They both said: 'We come, willingly.'" (Fussilat, 41:11)

Allah has addressed His Words to the heavens and the earth, which understood the Command of the Most Exalted, and they spoke with a language that none but Allah knows. If so, we have no right to say that the heavens and the earth are deaf. Even more, the earth has what resembles the ears whereby it listens and obeys. Recite the noble Qur'anic verse in which Allah, glory be to Him, says (what means):

"When the heaven is split asunder, and listens and obeys its Lord, and it must do so; and when the earth is stretched forth, and has cast out all that was in it and became empty, And listens and obeys its Lord, and it must do so." (Al-Inshiqâq, 84: 1-5)

What is then meant by '*Listens and obeys'* (in the noble Qur'anic verse)? It means that it heard by its own ear, that is to say the heaven has an ear wherewith it hears, and the earth has an ear wherewith it hears. So, when Allah commands them, they listen and obey. But we know nothing about all this.

Furthermore, Allah reveals to us that such inanimate beings have emotions and show due fear of Allah that transcend the emotions and fear evinced by the human heart. Allah, all praise be to Him, says (what means):

"Then, after that, your hearts were hardened and became as stones or even worse in hardness. And indeed, there are stones out of which rivers gush forth, and indeed, there are of them (stones)

which split asunder so that water flows from them, and indeed, there are of them (stones) which fall down for fear of Allah." (Al-Baqarah, 2: 74)

Thus, we have seen that inanimate beings have forms of life, some of which are mentioned in the Noble Qur'an, and we knew nothing about, whereas others are stated in the Hadiths of the Messenger of Allah, Muhammad (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) about the pebbles glorifying Allah between his hands and the mountains that used to glorify the Praises of Allah along with Dawûd (David, peace be upon him). In this Regard, the Noble Qur'an says (what means):

"And We subjected the mountains and the birds to glorify Our Praises along with Dawûd (David), And it was We Who were the doers (of all these things)." (Al-Anbiyâ', 21: 79)

Plants as well

If we move from inanimate beings to plants we will find life pulsing in them also. Plant is also a glorifier and rememberer of Allah. The story of the date palm trunk, which the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) used to deliver sermons while leaning his back on it, is a famous one. When they made for him a pulpit afterwards, instead of it, the trunk whined out of grief for being parted from the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace). It indicates the sensibility and feelings of plants, even if we are unaware of their language. Also, the date palm that kissed the hand of the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) is one of his several miracles.

All this draws to us a picture of the life of plants we are unaware of. We know that plants grow but there is also a Divine power of choice created in them. The plants imbibe water from the soil through small

capillaries known as (osmotic pressure) which causes the water to rise in these capillaries.

We have conducted this experiment while in school: they brought us some capillary tubes and placed them in a vessel containing water and the water rose in the capillary tubes by osmotic pressure. They inferred that plants feed in this manner but they forgot something. If plants were fed in this manner, there would not have existed different fruits since the water and the land are one. But Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has granted plants the particularity of choice besides that of kind. Therefore, we find that every tree chooses from land the elements appropriate to its kind and its fruits.

An apple tree, for instance, chooses from the elements of the land what ensures endowing a sweet taste, color and a special charming fragrant to its fruits, while having a colocynth tree growing just by its side. On the other hand, the colocynth tree chooses what makes it hard and bitter with a special color, while a pepper tree is growing by its side; which in turn chooses what makes it hot with a special flavor. All this is watered with the same water, yet the life that Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has endowed the plants with makes every kind of tree chooses from the elements of the land what suits it. Recite the noble Qur'anic verse in which Allah, all glory be to Him, says (what means):

"And in the earth are neighbouring tracts, and gardens of vines, and green crops (fields etc.), and date-palms, growing out two or three from a single stem root, or otherwise (one stem root for every palm), watered with the same water, yet some of them We make more excellent than others to eat." (Ar-Ra'd, 13: 4)

These are some colors of life in plants that we pay them no attention: sense, movement, choice and fulfillment of their role.

The ant speaks and the hoopoe has knowledge?

If we move after that to the insects we will find that they have a highly accurate system and a language whereby they communicate with their species. Has not an ant said when it saw the armies of Sulaimân (Solomon, peace be upon him) (what means):

"O ants! Enter your dwellings, lest Sulaimân (Solomon) and his hosts crush you, while they perceive not." (An-Naml, 27: 18)

What made the ant knows that it was Sulaimân (peace be upon him) and those with him were his armies? What made it know that when the armies of Sulaimân (peace be upon him) would tread on the ants they would crush and kill them, while they perceive not? What made the ant perceive that and by what mental power had it perceived, if it has not a life that we know nothing about, and perceptions that we do not understand?

When you read the story of the hoopoe and Sulaimân (peace be upon him), you would perceive the extent of the knowledge that the Creations of Allah, other than mankind, could possess. What did the hoopoe say to Sulaimân (peace be upon him)? The Noble Qur'an narrates to us (what means):

"I have grasped (the knowledge of a thing) which you have not grasped and I have come to you from Saba' (Sheba) with true news. I found a woman ruling over them, and she has been given all things that could be possessed by any ruler of the earth, and she has a great throne. I found her and her people worshipping the sun instead of Allah, and Shaitân (Satan) has made their deeds fair-seeming to them, and has barred them from (Allah's) Way, so they have no guidance." (An-Naml, 27: 22-24)

Let us contemplate what came in these noble Qur'anic verses. Allah has bestowed upon Sulaimân (peace be upon him) a kingdom the like of it shall never belong to any other among mankind or jinn. Nevertheless, He, all praise be to Him, made the hoopoe grasp of knowledge what Sulaimân (peace be upon him) was held unaware of, so that Sulaimân (peace be upon him) might learn that Allah, all praise be to Him, does not restrict the bestowal of His Knowledge to someone and if man learns a certain thing he is incognizant of many others.

Who has taught the hoopoe that this kingdom is called the kingdom of Saba' (Sheba); that those people were ruled by a woman who had a great throne and that they worshipped the sun instead of Allah, which was of Satan's handiwork who made their deeds fair-seeming to them? All this is the knowledge that Allah, all glory be to Him, has bestowed upon the hoopoe, whereas we believe that birds have no knowledge! That they only roam the sky searching for their provision and that is all what they can do!

Allah informs us that ants have a language with which they speak. Undoubtedly, had we known it, we would have understood what an ant says. That the hoopoe possesses knowledge, had we known how to talk to it, we would have learned a great deal about what is unknown to us. Moreover, all of them celebrate the Glory of Allah, all praise and glory be to Him! For life does not comprise man alone, but comprises the species of the entire universe, even if we knew but little about them.

A life… yet unknown to us

There exists living beings we know nothing about, save what Allah, all glory be to Him, has told us. Angels are creatures of light, which we neither see nor hear. The jinn are creatures of fire, which we

neither see nor hear, unless materialized. The Truth, Blessed and Exalted be He, warns us against Satan through the glorious verse saying (what means):

“Verily, he and Qabîluhu (his soldiers from the jinn or his tribe) see you from where you cannot see them.” (Al-A‘râf, 7: 27)

But we wonder: how can we believe in the existence of species and things that we do not see?

The answer is that man’s perception of a thing is not the sole means whereby its existence is proved. Moreover, there are things that exist but we do not perceive their existence. In other words, the existence of a thing is independent of our awareness of such an existence. Therefore, Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has prepared for the revelation of the things that we now perceive their existence, but we were ignorant of them in the past.

For instance, if you looked at a drop of water, you would see nothing, but if you put this drop of water under the microscope you would perceive life in it and bodies moving. Look at a drop of blood, you would see nothing in it, but if you sent it to the laboratory, it would report to you multitude of things it contains: as the red and white blood cells, the hemoglobin, besides other things. Furthermore, the microbe that penetrates the body is so minute but we can observe it in blood and specify its type.

Modern sciences have allowed us to learn from the secrets of the heavens what we have not known before. Everyday, we disclose new secrets, unknown planets and stars. Have these things been created the moment we discovered them. The answer is no, they definitely have preexisted, performing their role ever since in the universe.

The microbes, which the modern microscopes have allowed us to see, count and categorize, have preexisted and inflicted people with diseases but none knew a thing about them until these microscopes that magnify things by hundreds of thousands of times emerged. So, we discovered that there exists a stupendous life we know nothing about. A life that includes reproduction, multiplication and is governed by laws, but so minute that you cannot see even though the microbes penetrate your body, inflict you with fever and may cause your death.

For instance, the laser rays that specify distances so accurately and we use in agriculture, surgery and many other fields, is man the one behind their existence in the universe? Of course not, they were created since eternity and have kept performing their role precisely, but we have discovered them only a few years ago.

The Knowledge of Allah and that of mankind

What did Sulaimân (peace be upon him) say to his supporters from jinn and mankind when he wanted to bring the throne of Balqîs (the Queen of Sheba) after she had left her kingdom on her way to meet him? He said as the Noble Qur'an relates to us (what means):

"Which of you can bring me her throne before they come to me surrendering themselves in obedience?" (An-Naml, 27: 38)

Species have rivaled with one another to bring forward the throne of Balqîs to Sulaimân (peace be upon him). Man kept silent; because he is made of clay, neither have agility nor speedy movement. The ordinary jinn also kept silent, but the one who spoke was a stalwart of the jinn, so what did he say? The Noble Qur'an relates that incident through the verse saying (what means):

“An Ifrît (strong) from the jinn said: ‘I will bring it to you before you rise from your place (council).’” (An-Naml, 27: 39)

In other words, before Sulaimân (peace be upon him) leave his council, but for how long would the council of Sulaimân (peace be upon him) last? Perhaps for one, two or three hours, what matters is that before Sulaimân (peace be upon him) rise from his place he would find the throne before him. But what did the one with whom was knowledge of the Scripture say? He said as the Noble Qur’an relates (what means):

“I will bring it to you within the twinkling of an eye!” (An-Naml, 27: 40)

And before finishing his sentence the throne of Balqîs was before Sulaimân (peace be upon him)!!

It follows then that there exists of knowledge what makes man capable of bringing a thing from one place to another within a few seconds. But such knowledge is not attainable except to those specially favored by Almighty Allah with its mastery. In order for him to bring the throne within seconds, he must have called it or issued an order whereby it moved from the palace of Balqîs in Yemen to the council of Sulaimân (peace be upon him) in Syria!

This urges us to believe in all what Allah, praise be to Him, has told us about the things unseen to us. We should neither deny their existence nor their life just because we do not perceive them, why? Because we definitely have hundreds of things, which we could not see or perceive their existence and afterwards we perceived such existence. Consequently, it is an established fact in the universe.

There is also an unperceived life within our bodies. The organs of the body: the hand, the foot, the tongue, the skin and all the organs of our

bodies have a life, which we believe to be derived from us. In other words, we order them and they obey. You order the foot to walk to the Masjid and it obeys, and you order it to walk to a bar and it obeys. The hand also may help a cripple in crossing the road or you may use it in oppressing, killing and assaulting people. The tongue also, you utter the truth and it obeys you and you utter falsehood and it obeys you as well.

Seemingly, you are mastering those organs, which do as you wish, but actually they have a life of their own. They are glorifiers of Allah and believers in Him. They also have a language with which they talk. They are subjugated to you only in the life of this world. But when they come to an end, you would have no control over them. In the Hereafter, they would neither obey nor submit to your will, but they would bear testimony against you and curse you if you have subjugated them in what may incur the Wrath of Allah. Recite the Qur'anic Statement of The Truth, all praise and glory be to Him (which means):

"Till, when they reach it (Hell-fire), their hearing (ears) and their eyes, and their skins will testify against them as to what they used to do. And they will say to their skins, 'Why do you testify against us?' They will say: 'Allah has caused us to speak, as He causes all things to speak.'" (Fussilat, 41: 20-21)

Whoever has performed the enjoined duty of Hajj would wonder at the vigor that overwhelms the pilgrims. In spite of the hardships and the fact that they do not get enough sleep you find them highly active, whereas at their homeland they lack such vivacity though they have much rest.

This happens because the body organs desire neither sleep nor rest, but always want to be engaged in the Remembrance and Worship of Allah, simply because during the performance of the Hajj rituals man

is engaged with nothing except the Remembrance of Allah. Those organs wish that they do not miss His Remembrance by going to sleep so as to remain a glorifier of Allah, whereas, the organs of a sinning disbeliever force him to go to sleep so as to rest from his wrongdoing.

Some people may wonder how could those deaf organs speak? We reply by quoting the noble Qur'anic verse, which says (what means):

"Allah has caused us to speak, as He causes all things to speak." (Fussilat, 41: 21)

It follows that all what is termed a 'thing' in this worldly life has a language whereby Allah makes it speaks, for the entire universe celebrates the Glory of Allah, praise be to Him. If you wonder that your skin, hands, feet and tongue would bear testimony against you and would have a language and a power of discrimination, we say that Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has called our attention to such reality. We find that the organs of the one body perfectly know one another through a special language or code. So, if you lost, for instance, a part of your skin and wanted to graft it with the skin of another human, the body would reject it, whereas if you got hurt or lost a number of cellular tissues as a result of a wound or a burn, your whole body would work so powerfully to weave new tissues same as your old tissues to compensate what you have lost.

Accordingly, every body knows its organs quite well and repels the foreign cells. This means that Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has taught it how to distinguish between its own cells and that of other bodies.

All what is in the universe is alive

Briefly, we summarize what we have detailed by saying that everything in this universe is alive and everything enjoys a (form of) life that suits its mission. Neither the inanimate beings, nor the plants, nor the animals are dead but we simply do not perceive their lives. Furthermore, the inanimate beings sense, feel and cry. When a son of Adam (man) dies, two places mourn his death: the place where he used to prostrate himself (in worship) and the place where his deeds ascend to heaven. Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has set forth in the Noble Qur'an examples of the knowledge acquired by other species as well as their lives. For the ant knew that the man coming forward was the Prophet Sulaimân (peace be upon him) and that he might tramp on them with his army.

Life exists in all the species of the universe. It exists in what we see before us solid and motionless as mountain rocks, sand particles besides the other species of the universe that we know nothing about their lives. We have also shown the evidence that these species have a role to play in the universe.

We have also clarified that existence is one thing and its perception is another, as life is not limited to mankind alone but it extends to comprise all the species of the universe.

But is this the life that Allah, praise be to Him, wishes for us, merely a worldly life? Or is there another life beyond this worldly life which the Lord of Majesty, all praise and glory be to Him, has indeed meant for us. That is what we shall discuss, by the Will and Help of Allah, in the next chapter

Chapter 3

What Is Death?

Before starting to discuss death, we have to state that life in the Sight of Allah is not worldly life, but it is the Hereafter. That is because when Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, created man and breathed into him the soul He created for him, He granted him immortality. That is to say, everyone who is born and brought to this life would remain everlastingly immortal, be it in Paradise or Hellfire, may Allah save us from such an end (Hellfire). Even an infant that dies at the prime of its life will be resurrected and will be immortal in Paradise. Moreover, it will accompany its parents and admit them into Paradise.

When Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, breathed into man the soul He created for him, He granted him immortality. Thus, he lives his destined days or years of worldly life, then dies, and then is resurrected to live eternally in the Hereafter according to his deeds in adhering to the Divine Law or violating it. He is either to be blessed or tortured. The Noble Qur'an expresses that meaning through the glorious verse saying (what means):

"Verily, the home of the Hereafter, that is the life indeed (i.e. the eternal life that will never end), if they but knew." (Al-'Ankabût, 29; 64)

The abode of the Hereafter is the true life that man will live. As for worldly life, it is limited no matter how long we live in it; it is man's abode of trial where there is no immortality. Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, says in His Noble Book (what means):

"Answer Allah (by obeying Him) and (His) Messenger when he calls you to that which will give you life." (Al-Anfâl, 8: 24)

The aforesaid speech is addressed to the believers, however, Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, addressed it to them while they were still alive, so how could He say to them (what means), '***To that which will give you life'***, although they were actually living?

We reply by saying that this life is not the eternal life, which Allah has prepared for man. It is an abode of trial where man is to be tested in obeying the Divine Law. If he succeeded, he would be admitted into Paradise, but if he were engulfed by his desires and sins, he would be cast into Hellfire.

Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, calls every living being in this life 'dead', which signifies that it is definitely destined to die. Therefore, Allah addressed His Messenger (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) by saying (what means):

"Verily, you (O Muhammad) will die and verily, they (too) will die." (Az-Zumar, 39: 30)

Why did Allah, all glory be to Him, address the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) and his Companions as being dead though the Qur'anic verse was addressed to them while still alive? Because that is their destined fate, when man is born and his life begins, the death arrow darts at the same moment and death keeps pursuing the targeted person until the appointed death term comes and the arrow pierces through.

Death is not intrinsic in the universe but a transient journey. In the immaterial existence we were dead, then we came to worldly life alive, then we would die once again, then we would be resurrected. Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, says (what means):

"How can you disbelieve in Allah? Seeing that you were dead and He gave you life. Then He will give you death, then again will

bring you to life (on the Day of Resurrection) and then unto Him you will return." (Al-Baqarah, 2:28)

The stages of man's life or the life journey that he undertakes is divided into four: the first stage is death in the immaterial existence. The second is worldly life. The third is death in the *Barzakh* [the grave as the barrier or the intermediate realm that separates between this world and the other world, from the time of death till the time of Resurrection] life. And the fourth is eternal life, whether in Paradise or Hellfire. On the Day of Resurrection, death would be brought and its soul would be seized or slain as the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) has informed us in his noble Hadith:

"Death would be brought on the Day of Resurrection having the form of a ram then it would be slaughtered and a crier from Allah, all glory be to Him, would call: 'O people of Paradise, immortality without death. O people of Hellfire, immortality without death.'"

So, death has an end. Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, says about the people of Paradise (what means):

"They will never taste death therein except the first death (of this world), and He will save them from the torment of the blazing Fire." (Ad-Dukhân, 44:56)

We thus learn that death has an end, whereas life would remain eternally forever and that life is the one intrinsic in the universe, whereas death is incidental upon it.

Life within the grave!!

With imminence of death, the destined hour comes and is succeeded by the life of the grave, an interval that ends by Resurrection. Through close inspection, we perceive that this stage or interval is brief and cannot be compared with the life that will follow after Resurrection.

The Noble Qur'an expresses that meaning through the word 'visit' in the verse saying (what means):

"The mutual rivalry for piling up of worldly things diverts you, until you visit the graves (i.e. till you die)." (At-Takâthur, 102: 1-2)

It means that man in the grave is but a visitor and will not stay there forever. As long as he is a visitor not a habitant, then no matter how long the visit will last, there will come the time when it will end. It is a visit that will end by the Day of Crowding. Death is transition from certain laws to other different laws. Man while alive has a material being, that is the body, but at death the body returns once again to earth and is restored to its owner on the Day of Resurrection.

Death begins with drawing the last breaths, which means that the life of human choice has come to an end. Man in this worldly life has choices as well as a reasoning power to choose between alternatives. But the hour he dies, the time of free choice, set as a trial and test for him, ends and a new stage without choices and in which he is subdued begins. When man is suffering the agonies of death he knows for sure that he is dying, because he now can see the angels and sees from the Universe of Allah what has been kept veiled from him. Recite the noble Qur'anic verse in which Allah, all glory be to Him, says (what means):

"(It will be said to the sinners): 'Indeed you were heedless of this, now We have removed your covering, and sharp is your sight this Day!'" (Qâf, 50: 22)

At those moments humanity dies down and fates are definitely decided, either to Paradise or Hellfire, either to see the angels of mercy or the angels of torture. Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has informed us thus in His Noble Book regarding what would happen

to the inhabitants of Paradise when death approaches them. The Most Exalted says, (what means):

"Those whose lives the angels take while they are in a pious state (i.e. pure from all evil, and worshipping none but Allah Alone) saying (to them): Salâmun 'Alaikum (peace be on you) enter you Paradise, because of (the good) which you used to do (in the world)." (An-Nahl, 16: 32)

Hence, we learn that the believers, who have done righteous deeds, see the angels of mercy at their death hour, which is the first herald of glad tidings to them of entering Paradise. So, their souls are relieved and they smile joyfully because they are departing to that which is far better. If you looked at their faces after death, you would find them tranquil and peaceful for what they saw of the fulfillment of Allah's Promise, Who never breaks His Word.

As for those who disbelieved in Allah, sinned against Him, joined others in worship with Him and warred against His Religion, their meeting with death would certainly differ. The Noble Qur'an informs thus in the glorious verse saying (what means):

"And if you could see when the angels take away the souls of those who disbelieve (at death), they smite their faces and their backs, (saying): 'Taste the punishment of the blazing Fire.'" (Al-Anfâl, 8: 50)

Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, sets forth to us another picture of the disbelievers through the noble Qur'anic verse saying (what means):

"And if you could but see when the Zâlimûn (polytheists and wrongdoers, etc.) are in the agonies of death, while the angels are stretching forth their hands (saying): 'Deliver your souls! This

day you shall be recompensed with the torment of degradation because of what you used to utter against Allah other than the truth. And you used to reject His Ayât (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) with disrespect!'" (Al-An'âm, 6: 93)

We learn from these noble Qur'anic verses that as the believer sees his blessed end and his abode in Paradise while dying, the disbeliever also sees his doom and his abode in Hellfire while dying. Moreover, the angels of torture disgrace the disbeliever as a retribution for his disbelief. They smite his face and back and make him taste the torment of Hellfire. They defy him saying that if ever he possessed any power or might in worldly life to free himself from the torture and disgrace he now faces. But he would never be able to, because he neither has the power nor the might.

The power of human free choice has ended, and he became overpowered, as the rest of the species in the universe, after enjoying free will in worldly life. Amongst the signs of an evil end, we seek refuge with Allah from it, is to see the face of the disbeliever or the wrongdoer has gloomed, his body has convulsed and his features have contorted from the horrors he sees of the torment that awaits him.

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) warn the people against such a fate by saying O people:

"You have milestones so be you guided by your milestones, and you have an end so be you guided by your end. A believer is betwixt two dreads, betwixt a term that has passed knowing not what Allah will judge in it and a term that still remains knowing not what Allah will destine in it. So, let a servant takes provision for himself from his own self, and from his worldly life for his afterlife, and from hoariness before old age and from life before death. By the One in Whose Hands the

soul of Muhammad is, none shall be allowed to make amends after death, nor there shall be an abode after life save Paradise or Hellfire."

The hour of death as depicted by the Noble Qur'an, reveals the Unseen, lifts the screening veils and renders the sight sharp. All that is hidden from us is disclosed, as verified by the noble Qur'anic verse in which Allah, all glory be to Him, says (what means):

"Then why do you not (intervene) when (the soul of a dying person) reaches the throat? And you at the moment are looking on, but We (i.e. Our angels who take the soul) are nearer to him than you, but you see not." (Al-Wâqi'ah, 56: 83-85)

At that moment the first abodes of the Hereafter begins, because the dead person is to experience the befalling of his Doomsday and learns his end. When he dies, he hears but he will not be able to answer. He sees, but he will not be able to relate what he sees. The dead have a perception of their own just as the living do.

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) says to us, ***"If you visit the graves, greet their inhabitants, and say: Peace be upon you! Abodes of believing people."*** Since the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) has ordered us to do so, then definitely the inhabitants of the grave somehow perceive that salutation, otherwise the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) would not have instructed us thus.

Hence, the inhabitants of the grave somehow perceive their visitors and the greeting they offer them. They have another perceiving faculty; a mental or a reasoning power that makes them distinguishes between hope and despair. Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, says (what means):

"O you who believe! Take not as friends the people who incurred the Wrath of Allah (i.e. the Jews). Surely, they have been in despair to receive any good in the Hereafter, just as the disbelievers (buried) in graves have been in despair." (Al-Mumtahinah, 60: 13)

Reaching such a degree of despair needs some kind of perception. None can verge on despair or experience it except a perceiving person, who can distinguish between things to realize that this is a degree of despair and this is a degree of hope. Allah, all glory be to Him, says (what means):

"Just as the disbelievers (buried) in graves have been in despair." (Al-Mumtahinah, 60: 13)

The Barzakh life… out of the span of time

The *Barzakh* [the grave as the barrier or the intermediate realm that separates between this world and the other world, from the time of death till the time of Resurrection] life involves certain conceptions realized by the dead. The life of the grave is ungoverned by time. Therefore, if man were interred from the prime of worldly life and continued till the Day of Resurrection, he would think that he spent a day or a part of a day. Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, set forth a vivid example for that in the story of the People of the Cave. He caused them to sleep for three hundred and nine years and when they woke up they wondered as the Noble Qur'an narrates to us, saying (what means):

"Likewise, We awakened them (from their long deep sleep) that they might question one another. A speaker from among them

said: 'How long have you stayed (here)?' They said: 'We have stayed (perhaps) a day or part of a day.'" (Al-Kahf, 18: 19)

Why did they say that they stayed for a day or part of a day? Because when they looked at the faces and clothes of one another, they found them same as when they entered the cave. If, when they woke up they found that their nails had grown long, their hair and beards had turned white and their faces had mirrored the imprints of time, they would not have remarked that *perhaps they have stayed for a day or part of a day*. But during those three hundred years they were out of the span of time, therefore it did not leave its imprints on them.

Similarly, the inhabitants of the grave will rise with the same appearance they had when they were buried. Hence, no human dies while still a child and is resurrected an old man, no matter how many years have elapsed. Therefore, The Patron, all praise be to Him, will ask His servants saying (what means):

"He (Allah) will say: 'What number of years did you stay on earth?' They will say: 'We stayed a day or part of a day. Ask of those who keep account.'" (Al-Mu'minûn, 23: 112-113)

We learn from this that amongst the laws of the *Barzakh* [the grave as the barrier or the intermediate realm that separates between this world and the other world, from the time of death till the time of Resurrection] that no time leaves its imprints on the inhabitants of the grave because they live out of the span of time.

But is there torture for the inhabitants of the grave? No, there is no torture save after Judgment. Nevertheless, while engraved, man sees his abode whether in Hellfire or Paradise, but why? So that a believer feels the grace that Allah, The Most Exalted, has bestowed on him by saving him from Hellfire and appreciates it even more when he sees the Hellfire and its blaze versus Paradise and its delights. Hence, a

comparison is drawn between the good-doer and the evildoer: the one who has wronged himself thus depriving it from everlasting delight and the demeaning torture that he ended in.

The believer feels the grace and mercy that Allah has bestowed on him; that Allah has guarded him form Hellfire, so his heart is relieved and he realizes the greatness of the Blessings of Allah on him.

The Truth, all praise and glory be to Him, has depicted to us what would happen to the people of Fir'aun (Pharaoh) while engraved through the noble Qur'anic verse saying (what means):

"The Fire; they are exposed to it, morning and afternoon, and on the Day when the Hour will be established (it will be said to the angels): 'Cause Fir'aun's (Pharaoh) people to enter the severest torment!'" (Ghâfir, 40: 46)

When are the people of Pharaoh are exposed to Hellfire? Were they exposed to it in worldly life? If they were exposed to it and saw it but for a moment they would not have worshipped Pharaoh, surely they would have been the ones to kill him and cast him into the sea.

Exposure to Hellfire regarding the people of Pharaoh did not occur in worldly life. Would it then happen in the Hereafter? No, because in the Hereafter there would be no exposure, rather the people of Pharaoh would be cast into Hellfire to be tortured.

Hence, they were not exposed to Hellfire in worldly life, and they would not be exposed to it in the Hereafter because they would actually be cast into it.

There remains the *Barzakh* [the grave as the barrier or the intermediate realm that separates between this world and the other world, from the time of death till the time of Resurrection] life or the

life of the grave. The people of Pharaoh are exposed to Hellfire morning and afternoon in the *Barzakh* life or the life of the grave, but do the people of Pharaoh come forth twice a day to be exposed to Hellfire? Or are they exposed to it while engraved?

No one can tell! Except that there exists some kind of torment to which man is exposed while engraved. But true torment will not be inflicted save after Judgment on the Day of Resurrection. Indeed, enough of torment that the people of Pharaoh twice see the fire wherein they will be tortured, in the morning and afternoon, because expecting distress is severer than its actual befalling. Therefore, they become certain that they will be tortured in that Hellfire. Whenever they looked at it, it would afflict them with a horrible torment, perhaps severer than the torment of Hellfire itself.

Your Lord, all praise and glory be to Him, has decreed that whoever departs from this world would never return to it again, till the Day of Resurrection. The Most Exalted says (what means):

"Until, when death comes to one of them (those who join partners with Allah), he says: 'My Lord! Send me back, so that I may do good in that which I have left behind!' No! It is but a word that he speaks, and behind them is Barzakh (a barrier) until the Day when they will be resurrected." (Al-Mu'minûn, 23: 99-100)

What is the *Barzakh*? The *Barzakh* is the barrier between the living and the dead, whereby the dead can never return to worldly life once again. When the martyrs saw the great delights that Allah has prepared for them, they begged Allah, all glory be to Him, to return to worldly life just to inform their brethren about what they have seen. But, The Almighty told them (the Divine Hadith saying): ***'I have decreed that whoever departs from it, shall never return to it.'*** And The Almighty pledged Himself to inform the believers about the merit of martyrdom and the elevated status that awaits martyrs.

Him Alone gives life and causes death

Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, is The Originator of life and death. That is to say, Allah, The Most Exalted, is the only One Who brings man from life to death and from death to life. Therefore, amongst His Divine Names, all praise be to Him, is The Giver of life and The Causer of death. The Noble Qur'an conveys to us the words of the Prophet Ibrâhîm (Abraham, peace be upon him), who said (what means):

"Verily! They are enemies to me, save the Lord of the 'Alamîn (mankind, jinn and all that exists); 'Who has created me, and it is He Who guides me; And it is He Who feeds me and gives me to drink. And when I am ill, it is He who cures me; And Who will cause me to die, and then will bring me to life (again); And Who, I hope will forgive me my faults on the Day of Recompense, (the Day of Resurrection).'" (Ash-Shu'arâ', 26: 77-82)

We notice in these noble Qur'anic verses that Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has emphasized the matters that some people believe that others than Almighty Allah have a hand in them. But as for the matters which man can never claim to have a hand in, He stated them without emphasis.

The Most Exalted says (in His Noble Book the words of Ibrâhîm which means): ***'Who has created me,'*** as no one can claim that he creates. But The Almighty says (in His Noble Book the words of Ibrâhîm which means): ***'It is He Who guides me,'*** stating the stressed subject pronoun 'He' because there are claimers of securing guidance,

who practice deceit so as to induce people to follow them and adopt their course. Therefore, The Most Exalted has not stated the subject pronoun 'He' in the first part of verse 78; he did not say, ***'It is He Who has created me,'*** but said, ***'Who has created me,'*** because the issue of creation is utterly decided as solely pertaining to Allah, all praise and glory be to Him. The subject pronoun also recurs in the Qur'anic statement of Ibrâhîm (peace be upon him), when he said (what means): ***'It is He Who feeds me and gives me to drink.'*** Here, The Almighty also stated the pronoun, 'He' because man has some action to do as bringing food or delivering water to people.

Then Allah, Whose Majesty reigns supreme, says (in His Noble Book the words of Ibrâhîm which means): ***'And when I am ill, it is He who cures me,'*** where The Almighty also used the pronoun 'He', so that no one claims that the doctor is the one who cures. The truth is the absolute opposite. The doctor only gives medical aid, whereas the only One Who cures is Allah, all praise and glory be to Him. Moreover, the doctor can be one of the causes behind death. It may happen that the doctor prescribes to the patient a wrong medication or inject him with what he believes to be his cure, thus causes his death. Therefore, Allah, all glory be to Him, placed a stress on it with the pronoun 'He' that is used, as mentioned previously, for emphasis, so The Almighty says (in His Noble Book the words of Ibrâhîm which means): ***'It is He who cures me.'***

But when it comes to life and death, there is no need to use a stressing subject pronoun. Therefore, The Almighty says (in His Noble Book the words of Ibrâhîm which means): ***'And Who will cause me to die, and then will bring me to life (again).'*** Why? Because life and death belong to Allah alone and none can ever lay claim to them.

Nimrod and his claim of causing death and giving life

The Noble Qur'an narrates to us the story of Nimrod, on whom Allah has bestowed sovereignty, but instead of showing gratefulness to Allah for His Blessings and performing righteous good deeds, he was misled by the conceit of worldly life, so he claimed that he gives life and causes death. Recite the noble Qur'anic verse in which Allah, all glory be to Him, says (what means):

"Have you not looked at him who disputed with Ibrâhîm (Abraham) about his Lord (Allah), because Allah had given him the kingdom? When Ibrâhîm (Abraham) said (to him): 'My Lord (Allah) is He Who gives life and causes death.' He said, 'I give life and cause death.' Ibrâhîm (Abraham) said, 'Verily! Allah causes the sun to rise from the east; then cause it you to rise from the west.' So the disbeliever was utterly defeated. And Allah guides not the people, who are Zâlimûn (wrong-doers, etc.).") Al-Baqarah, 2: 258)

Nimrod summoned one of his subjects, then ordered his soldiers to kill him and said, '*I caused him to die*!!' And just before the execution he said, '*Pardon him*,' and then he said, '*I caused him to live*!!'

We say to him, 'You have not differentiated between the two events, and you have not differentiated between life and death.' Killing is not death, but it is a destruction of the physical structure of the body so the soul departs it, because the soul does not dwell except in a sound body having special characteristics. Therefore, Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, says about His Messenger (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) (what means):

“Muhammad (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) is no more than a Messenger, and indeed (many) Messengers have passed away before him. If he dies or is killed, will you then turn back on your heels (as disbelievers)? And he who turns back on his heels, not the least harm will he do to Allah, and Allah will give reward to those who are grateful.” (Âl-‘Imrân, 3: 144)

Therefore, death differs from killing; death is the departure of the soul from the body while the physical structure is sound and only Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, causes death. But man can commit murder either by a sharp knife or a gunshot. In both cases the soul departs the body, but in the first case (that is death) the soul departs the body while the physical structure is perfect, whereas in murder the physical structure has to be destroyed before the soul departs the body. In both cases, the dead and the murdered shall be gathered unto Allah on the Day of Resurrection as verified by the noble Qur’anic verse in which Allah, all glory be to Him, says (what means):

“And whether you die, or are killed, verily, unto Allah you shall be gathered.” (Âl-‘Imrân, 3: 158)

We can thus see that whateve r be the end of man, whether through murder or death, he will meet Allah on the Day of Resurrection. As we said before, death annuls life and life annuls death, therefore they never exist together in a thing. It is either life or death. Allah, all glory be to Him, says (what means):

“Who has created death and life, that He may test you which of you is best in deed. And He is the All-Mighty, the Oft-Forgiving.” (Al-Mulk, 67: 2)

As if life is but a trial that is to be followed by death, then begins the first stages of the Hereafter and then comes Judgment. But Allah, all

praise and glory be to Him, has concealed from all of us the time of death. Allah, glory be to Him, says (what means):

“No person knows what he will earn tomorrow, and no person knows in what land he will die. Verily, Allah is All-Knower, All-Aware (of things).” (Luqmân, 31: 34)

Such concealment by Allah has a great wisdom. First, that man is to expect death at any moment and such an expectation is a consciousness of death. You know that you may die the next hour, so you hasten to the performance of good deeds lest your decreed time of death does not give you respite and your soul is taken while your good deeds are but few. You also forbear from committing misdeeds lest you do wrong and fate does not give you respite to repent and you die a sinner.

So, the concealment of death time is the greatest announcement of it; at the same time it is the highest alertness to meet it any moment. Whereupon, we hasten to good deeds and abandon sin, thus prosperity prevails and sin dwindles.

We have to be absolutely certain that there is no cause behind death except the appointed term (of Allah). Never believe that sickness may kill or a bullet may shoot dead except when the term of man’s life in this world has come to an end. When man falls ill he may take a tablet of aspirin or a cup of tea and he gets cured because he still has time to live. On the other hand, he may be transported to the hospital where he is surrounded by many doctors and yet dies, because death is predestined by Allah, and the Predestinations of Allah are never overpowered.

Allah, all glory be to Him, says (what means):

“Say (O Muhammad): ‘I have no power over any harm or profit to myself except what Allah may will. For every Ummah (a community or a nation), there is a term appointed; when their term is reached, neither can they delay it nor can they advance it an hour (or a moment).’” (Yûnus, 10: 49)

Do not consider causes in death, because when death comes the entire universe is considered its cause and none can ever stop it. When ‘Ali bin Abu Tâlib (may Allah be pleased with him) was asked, ***‘Do not you fear death?’ He said, ‘No, the day it comes none can stop it, and the day it does not, none can bring it.’***

The causes of death we usually list: as sickness, senility and others are unreal, because when death comes it needs no cause. But it is truthful to say, ‘He died because his appointed lifetime has ended.’

Allah, The Truth, all praise and glory be to Him, says (what means):

“Wheresoever you may be, death will overtake you even if you are in fortresses built up strong and high!” (An-Nisâ’, 4: 78)

We summarize what we have detailed by saying that life and death are two antitheses, where one annuls the other. That Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has granted man the aspect of perpetuity in life, but death is transient and will end and be slaughtered on the Day of Resurrection. That man is immortal in this universe, whether in Paradise or Hellfire; we seek refuge with Allah from such an end (Hellfire). That life of the grave involves some kind of perception; therefore we greet the inhabitants of the grave on visiting them. That those buried in graves from disbelievers are in despair of receiving the Mercy of Allah. That life in the grave also involves a detachment from time, because the inhabitants of the grave are neither influenced by time nor feel its passage. It also involves a sort of witnessing torment. That death is the end of the interval that Allah has granted to man and

empowered him with freedom of choice during it. But when he dies the power of human choice ends and the time of trial terminates.

When the believer dies the angels of mercy receive him with the glad tidings of entering Paradise, so he dies with a relieved soul because he is going to a far better place. But when the angels of torture receive the disbeliever they smite his face and back and make him taste the colors of torment so he dies with a gloomy face because he is going to a far worse place. That Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, is The Creator of life and death. None can lay claim to them nor say that he can give life nor cause death, because only Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, brings out the living from the dead, and brings out the dead from the living.

We have discussed man's death, but what about his immortality? What is the truth of that immortality? That is what we shall discuss in details in the next chapter, by the Will of Allah.

Chapter four

Man And Immortality

Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has created man to enjoy eternal life; a fact many people omit. People measure the lifetime of man by his worldly life, which is a false claim. Worldly life is nothing but a minor stage in the life of man. The whole universe together with its sun, its moon and stars created to be in the service of man millions of years ago, their age can in no way be longer than the one for whose sake Allah has created them and subjugated to his service. Moreover, the life of man cannot be measured by the few or several years that he spends in this universe but it extends far beyond to be eternal.

Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has granted immortality to all that came to this universe from man and jinn, no difference made between a believer and a nonbeliever. The only difference is that the believer will abide forever in Paradise, whereas the nonbeliever will abide forever in Hellfire. So, he difference will be in the abode of eternity.

Allah, Blessed and Exalted be He, has granted man immortality when He breathed into him the soul He created for him. But it is the Will of Allah that our life be stages: first comes death, followed by life, then death, and then eternity. Being oblivious, we care only for one stage: that of worldly life and deem it the only life we have. The truth is that worldly life, as we have said earlier, is just a stage or a minor part in the great eternal life journey.

We were dead in the immaterial existence, then The Truth, all praise and glory be to Him, willed that we should come to this life. Then, He would cause us to die to undergo the *Barzakh* [the grave as the barrier or the intermediate realm that separates between this world and the

other world, from the time of death till the time of Resurrection] life while dead. Then would follow Resurrection and Judgment upon which everything would be settled, and we would become immortal either in Paradise or Hellfire, we seek refuge with Allah from such an end (Hellfire).

When Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, speaks about life, He means the eternal life in the Hereafter. The worldly life is but an abode of trial and the Hereafter is the true life that every one of us must seek. The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said in his noble Hadith:

"What have I to do with worldly life. In worldly life I am but a traveler who sought shade under a tree then he departed and left it behind."

Life and death belongs only to Allah, unrivaled. Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has unveiled to man from the secrets of His Universe whatever He willed with the exception of three things that He kept for Himself: (namely) (i) life, (ii) the factors of maintaining life, (iii) and death. None can ever lay claim to these three things, because Allah, Blessed and Exalted be He, is the One Who created and guaranteed to His creatures the factors of the continuity of their survival. When the appointed term is due Allah will destine them to die and they will. The beginning of the creation is only in the Hands of Allah; an indisputable truth, and none can grant life to any creature save Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, Who challenged the entire humanity in this regard.

The Truth, all praise and glory be to Him, says (what means):

"O mankind! A similitude has been coined, so listen to it (carefully): Verily! Those on whom you call besides Allah, cannot create (even) a fly, even though they combine together for the purpose. And if the fly snatched away a thing from them, they

would have no power to release it from the fly. So weak are (both) the seeker and the sought." (Al-Hajj: 22: 73)

Allah, Blessed and Exalted be He, has challenged the entire humanity with all its scientists, veterans and every mighty person, to create but a single fly and Allah is indeed The Omniscient of their incapability and weakness. The call challenges both science and scientists since the revelation of the Noble Qur'ân till the establishment of the Last Hour that they will never be able to do it.

Allah has revealed some of the secrets of His Creation to some scientists in the field of heredity or genealogy. The attainment of such knowledge is supposed to deepen their belief that Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has specified to every creature the code of its life. But instead, they used this knowledge in an attempt to distort the Creation of Allah, wherefrom ensued a fly having wings in its eye. They claimed that they are able to change the sex of a baby from female to male, but it results in a deformed good for nothing male. Satan is ever to tempt man to change and distort the Creation of Allah in order to spoil the enjoined duty of the creatures on earth. Allah, Blessed and Exalted be He, depicts this to us in through the Qur'anic verse saying (what means):

'"Verily, I will mislead them, and surely, I will arouse in them false desires; and certainly, I will order them to slit the ears of cattle, and indeed I will order them to change the nature created by Allah.' And whoever takes *Shaitân* (Satan) as a *Walî* (protector or helper) instead of Allah, has surely suffered a manifest loss." (An-Nisâ', 4: 119)

If genealogy achieved something in the sixties, it would achieve nothing regarding animals and mankind. It would bring about nothing but useless distortion of the creatures. If trifling with genes has resulted in a fly having wings in place of its eyes, this would neither

lead to enhancing its role in the universe nor make it more powerful. It is only an act of spoiling and deforming.

The secret of life and its end

Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, is the Sole Possessor of the secret of life. There is no Creator other than Him. He is also the Only Maintainer of the factors ensuring the continuity of life represented in air, water and food. Allah, Whose Majesty reigns supreme, is the Creator of the atmosphere. Certainly, the air that we all breathe is not created by man but by Allah, all praise and glory be to Him; also the water that we all drink is the Creation of Allah, all praise and glory be to Him.

The process of rainfall, starting from evaporation that takes place under the effect of sunrays, to the condensation of that vapor at the higher atmospheric layers followed by the formation of clouds, then the winds that push the clouds to wherever Allah wills for rain to fall. All this is the creation of Allah, all praise and glory be to Him.

We say to those who claim that man can cause rainfall, 'We will not argue with you. The world is full of deserts and Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has created rivers that run for thousands of kilometers and has originated the sources of water that guarantee the continuity of their flowing. We shall not ask you to create a river for us, but all we ask from those who claim the ability to cause rainfall to create a small canal, not a river, just a small canal in the desert. When you succeed in doing so, you may come ahead and claim that you are able to cause rainfall. But before this you have nothing to say to us.'

We do not want to be engaged in mere sophistry based on no objectivity for we are real tired of empty talk. Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, is the One Who created sustenance. He is the One Who supplied plant with water and the necessary elements present in

the soil. From the miracles of the Creation of Allah manifested in the seed is its dependency in its nutrition on a food store present within the same seed. That store keeps nourishing the seed till it gives off leaves through which it respires, and roots through which it sucks food from the soil.

None can claim that he created the first seed of everything that exists in the universe. For instance, Allah created the first wheat seed, then it was transmitted from one generation to another same as everything on earth. However, man can develop the species in order to get a better harvest and increase productivity, but the beginning remains only in the Possession of Allah, for man can never create even a single seed.

The factors of the continuity of life are all in the Hands of Allah, all praise and glory be to Him. In this regard Allah says (what means):

"Then tell Me (about) the human semen that you emit. Is it you who create it (i.e. make this semen into a perfect human being), or are We the Creator?" (Al-Wâqi'ah, 56: 58- 59)

The semen is one of the causes of creation. Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, is the One Who created and originated it, maintaining life by it from the lifetime of Adam (peace be upon him) till the Day of Resurrection. Allah, Whose Majesty reigns supreme, says (what means):

"Tell Me! The water that you drink. Is it you who cause it from the rainclouds to come down, or are We the Causer of it to come down?" (Al-Wâqi'ah, 56: 68-69)

Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, wants to draw our attention to the fact that rainfall is only in His Power. Anything else that is said is untrue. Allah, all glory be to Him, is the only One Who is capable of providing us with sweet water from the saline. With respect to sowing, The Truth says in His entirely clear Qurânic verses (what means):

“Tell Me! The seed that you sow in the ground. Is it you that make it grow, or are We the Grower?” (Al-Wâqi‘ah, 56: 63-64)

Man’s task is only to sow, whereas the seeds to be cultivated are a direct creation by Allah. Similarly, the water by which the seeds are supplied and the life cycle of the plant until it becomes a tree and yields fruits are from Allah. We only sow the seed in the ground then stand and wait until it becomes a fruitful tree. We have no hand in its growth or its life cycle. Afterwards, the tree yields fruits and we gather them.

The two cycles of creation: death and life

We then move to the ending of life, also decreed by Allah. For no one is capable of granting immortality to himself or to others. Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, says to His Messenger (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) (in His Noble Book what means): **“And We granted not to any human being immortality before you (O Muhammad), then if you die, would they live forever?” (Al-Anbiyâ’, 21: 34)**

In spite of the progress that the entire world has achieved in culture, science and technology, it stands powerless when it comes to death. People may talk about the apparent causes behind death but the indisputable fact is that man dies only because it is the end of his lifetime.

But there remains one point that we have to discuss. Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, says (what means): **“He brings forth the living from the dead, and it is He Who brings forth the dead from the living.” (Al-An‘âm, 6: 95)**

Some of the scientists have tried to interpret this noble Qur'anic verse in a naive way saying, 'Allah brings forth the egg from the hen. The egg is a dead matter, thus, Allah brings forth the dead from the living. And He brings forth the living from the dead, that is to say, He brings forth the chick from the egg.'

We have previously discussed this issue and said that this is a naive interpretation, simply because all that exists in this worldly life is living and has a life of its own, even the inanimate beings. But who is the dead from whom life is to be brought forth?

We answer by saying that the death phase precedes life and follows it. In other words, we were dead before coming to this world. At birth moment, our life cycle begins and when it ends we return dead once more.

Thus, all that exists in this universe falls between two cycles of creation: death and life. Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, says (what means): **"How can you disbelieve in Allah? Seeing that you were dead and He gave you life. Then He will give you death, then again will bring you to life (on the Day of Resurrection) and then unto Him you will return." (Al-Baqarah, 2: 28)**

Every living thing has a duty in this worldly life. When this duty comes to an end, it will depart worldly life and become dead. The tree, for instance, after yielding all the fruits it is ordained to give, will die and leave life because it has fulfilled its duty. And every animal has an assigned duty in life; it fulfills it then departs to the world of the dead. Similarly, man has a duty in this life, which is the period of trial that Allah has ordained for him. After being put to trial once or many times, life ends for him because the duty for whose sake he has been brought to life has come to an end.

But we again wonder: if all what exists in worldly life is living, who is dead?

Names of the Supreme Self of Allah and Timelessness of His Divine Attributes

Worth mentioning, before answering this question, to pinpoint the fact that amongst the Divine Names of Allah is the Giver of life and the Causer of death. The Divine Names of Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, denote timelessness and fulfillment together. The Divine Attributes of Almighty Allah pertain to His Supreme Self and to all that is related to His Supreme Self.

When we say that Allah is The All-Provider this means that His Majesty is The All-Provider before creating those whom He provides, in other words, before there exists a creature (of Allah) that He provides. Allah, The Exalted and Ever-Majestic, has provided sustenance to the first creature for being The All-Provider. Had not His Majesty been The All-Provider before creating those whom He provides, how could He have provided sustenance to His creatures the moment He created them?

Almighty Allah is The Creator before creating, because in the name of being the Creator, He created. Such a Divine Attribute of Allah preceded the existence of any single creature. The Attribute is eternally inherent to His Supreme Self.

Life is a creation and death as well, and we live through both creations. We experience life in this world and in the Hereafter. And we experience death before coming to this world and after departing from it till Resurrection.

As long as Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, is The Creator then everything that is brought into existence is of His Creation, and everything that departs this worldly life and passes to death belongs to

Allah. The passage of a thing from the world of life to the world of death is what Allah calls life and death.

We were…before coming to be

Truly, before coming to this worldly life, we were already created, as proven when Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, addressed us and made us testify as to ourselves and took our pledge that He is our Lord. We were already created in the death world then we moved, by the Command and Leave of Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, to worldly life, so we became alive after being dead, but how?

We moved from the death world to the world of earthly life. As mentioned previously, all that exist in this worldly life is alive, so just by moving from the world of death to that of life made us alive. Also, when we depart this world, we would move once more from the world of life to that of death. Then after our resurrection, we would move from the world of death to that of life.

This does not mean that death is a nonexistence, but it means that we have moved from a world having rules of its own to another world having other special rules. That transition does not take place to any creature amongst the creatures of Allah except by the Leave and Will of Allah, all praise and glory be to Him.

In other words, we were dead, then we became alive, then we would move from the world of earthly life to the *Barzakh* [the grave as the barrier or the intermediate realm that separates between this world and the other world, from the time of death till the time of Resurrection] world, becoming dead again. Then we would return once again to the world of life on the hour of Resurrection for Judgment.

No one can claim that during the *Barzakh* life we are unconscious. That is untrue; we have consciousness but of a special kind. We

perceive and realize other realties. At the moment of death, the unseen realms are disclosed to man and he sees the hidden. He would then beg Allah to return to worldly life once more after seeing the requital, after seeing Paradise and Hellfire, seeing them for real. Recite the Qur'anic verse in which Allah, The Most Exalted, says (what means):

"Until, when death comes to one of them (those who join partners with Allah), he says: 'My Lord! Send me back, So that I may do good in that which I have left behind!' No! It is but a word that he speaks, and behind them is Barzakh (a barrier) until the Day when they will be resurrected." (Al-Mu'minûn, 23: 99-100)

At that moment man – whether a believer or a disbeliever – would surely know his destiny. He would know whether his abode is in Paradise or in Hellfire, we seek refuge with Allah from it (Hellfire). He would be fully aware that the journey of his life has not ended by his death. That he is going to a nonexistence to be followed by existence. Otherwise, he would not have begged Allah to send him back to worldly life so that he may do good deeds. While in the death world we become certain of the continuity of existence, besides many other realities that man comes to learn. For instance, man learns that there is no escape from the Fate of Allah, and that he would become alive once more.

Suicide and immortality in Hellfire

No doubt, life and death are two antitheses. None can combine between them nor move himself from one stage to another. Some may say that it is true that man can never step from death to life, a truth we all know and none can dispute it, however, man can step from life to death by committing suicide: whether by shooting himself, or simply by throwing himself from a high building or from a mountaintop, or by drowning himself.

My answer to the one who claims thus would be: Why confuse between death and killing? Indeed, the one who kills himself is doomed to abide in Hellfire forever, why? Because man has not created his self so why destroys it? Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, is the One Who created him, so man together with his body, soul, and life belong to Allah. By committing suicide he surely has wasted what he does not own.

Whoever kills someone unintentionally, his recompense is to pay the due blood money. On the other hand, he who premeditatedly kills a person, not in retaliation of murder or for spreading mischief on earth, certainly his retribution will be Hellfire to abide therein forever. Accordingly, the suicide has intentionally killed himself, therefore torment is justified against him.

Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, wants us to learn that life with respect to man is preceded by death, which means that man will not begin this worldly life unless he has previously experienced its antithesis, which is death, so as to learn that this life will surely end up at the stage that preceded it before its own course has begun. Thereupon, if it were preceded by death, then death would surely succeed it.

There is a great difference between life from our own perspective and the real life. From our own perspective, life could be play, amusement, mutual boasting and rivalry regarding wealth and children. This can be our conception of worldly life; therefore we pass this life aiming to fulfill our desires. However, Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has not created this world to us for such play and amusement, but The Almighty made it for a purpose which He willed that it should be fulfilled. Recite the Qur'anic verse in which Allah, all glory be to Him, says (what means):

"We created not the heavens and the earth and all that is between them for a (mere) play. Had We intended to take a pastime (i.e. a wife or a son, etc.), We could surely have taken it from Us, if We were going to do (that)." (Al-Anbiyâ', 21:16-17)

Allah, Blessed and Exalted be He, has planned a role to be performed by every living being. Such a role is the purpose of life; moreover, it is the purpose of the entire creation.

If you want to discover the role of anything, you should ask its creator or maker why did he create it? Same as when we ask the manufacturer to first assign the purpose of his machine.

For example, the washing machine is designed to facilitate the process of washing for any housewife. This machine has its own system. After assigning its role, the manufacturer, started to design the machine, which could achieve such a role. Afterwards, he determined the technique of its operation in addition to its maintenance, in case of damage. So, if we face any problem that causes it not to function properly, we should refer to the instructions found in the catalogue or the manual designed by the manufacturer to know the cause of the damage. But if we decided to repair the machine by ourselves, regardless of any instructions given by the manufacturer, surely the machine would be damaged instead of being repaired.

The point is, when it comes to human industries (i.e., cars, refrigerators…etc.) we follow the instructions given by the manufacturer, however when trying to reform human life we import other destructive systems regardless of the system set by The Creator of mankind, who is the Best Knower of what He has created. We lay aside the Divine Law claiming that we are more capable of reforming our lives than Almighty Allah. Allah, Blessed and Exalted be He, illustrates that meaning to us through the noble Qur'anic verse saying (which means):

"And when it is said to them: 'Make not mischief on the earth,' they say: 'We are only peacemakers.' Verily! They are the ones who make mischief, but they perceive not." (Al-Baqarah, 2:11-12)

In brief, we summarize what we have detailed by saying that Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has created man to be immortal. Every breathing soul, since Adam (peace be upon him) till the Day of Resurrection, is given immortality by Allah, either in Paradise to enjoy great pleasure and luxury, or in Hellfire to be tormented. Man is to remain immortal; none in this world will die without being resurrected, and none will be resurrected without Judgment, and none will receive Judgment without being admitted either into Paradise or to be cast into Hellfire.

Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has made death the first stages of life. We all came to life after death in the immaterial existence, thus moving from death to life; a process that only Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, is capable of. He is the sole Creator of life and death, and only Allah has the power to resurrect those who are in the graves. No power in this world, implicit or explicit, individual or collective, can transfer man from death to life, or can stop his journey from life to death.

Mankind and all the creatures in the universe are incapable to grant life or inhibit death. Life and death are two antitheses. He, who is in life, surely is not dead and he, who is in death, is surely not alive. Each has his rules and his own world.

We have also illustrated that there is death and there is killing, and how each of them differs from the other. Afterwards, we have discussed the purpose of creating this world, and the reason why Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has created it. We asserted the fact that the maker of a thing is the only one who can fulfill the aim of his manufacture. But man believes that he can assign himself a

purpose other than the one he has been created for, under the pretext of reforming earth, while in fact he is corrupting it.

But why has Allah created worldly life? That is what we shall discuss in detail in the next chapter, by the Will of Allah.

Chapter five

The Life Of This World

Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has created the universe for a specific purpose. He informed us with it in order to know why the creation has been brought about? What is the aim? And what is the end?

Allah, Whose Majesty reigns supreme, says (what means):

"And I (Allah) created not the jinn and humans except they should worship Me (Alone). I seek not any provision from them (i.e. provision for themselves or for My creatures) nor do I ask that they should feed Me (i.e. feed themselves or My creatures). Verily, Allah is the All-Provider, Owner of Power, the Most Strong." (Az-Zâriyât, 51: 56-58).

The aim behind creating this universe is to worship Allah, praise Him, celebrate His Glory, and exalt Him. In these glorious Qur'anic verses The Truth, all praise and glory be to Him, did not assign by name except ***'The jinn and humans',*** while excluding the rest of the creatures in the universe, but why?

Because Allah has given freedom of choice only to those two species amongst the creatures: they can believe in Allah and they can – Allah forbid – disbelieve in Him. They can obey Allah and they can – Allah forbid – disobey Him. As for the rest of the species in the universe, they are made to obey and never can disobey. They continually glorify the Praises of Allah, the Exalted and Ever-Majestic; they never forget His Glorification or slacken in it. Recite the Qur'anic verse in which Allah, Blessed and Exalted be He, says (what means):

"See you not that to Allah prostrates whoever is in the heavens and whoever is on the earth, and the sun, and the moon, and the stars, and the mountains, and the trees, and Ad-Dawâb (moving living creatures, beasts, etc.), and many of mankind? But there are many (men) on whom the punishment is justified. And whomsoever Allah disgraces, none can honour him. Verily! Allah does what He wills." (Al-Hajj, 22:18)

The noble Qur'anic verse generalized prostration, which include all the creatures, whether in the heavens or on the earth. None of them leave submission, showing obedience, remembering Allah and Glorifying His Praises. But mankind did not attain such a generalization. Instead, they are divided into two parties: one that obeys and believes and the other that disobeys and disbelieves. This division came only when Allah mentioned mankind, why? Because, as we have said before, Allah, Blessed and Exalted be He, has given mankind as well as jinn freedom of choice.

Allah has created this great universe to serve man, the viceroy on earth. The entire universe willingly obeyed their Creator, but many among mankind whom Allah has given sovereignty over His universe did not comply!

Allah, Whose Majesty reigns supreme, has offered the trust, which is freedom of choice, to all species of the universe, but they were afraid to bear such a responsibility and said, 'O Lord! We want to be compelled to obey.' Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, says (what means):

"Truly, We did offer Al-Amânah (the trust or moral responsibility or honesty and all the duties which Allah has ordained) to the heavens and the earth, and the mountains, but they declined to bear it and were afraid of it (i.e. afraid of Allah's

Torment). But man bore it. Verily, he was unjust (to himself) and ignorant (of its results)." (Al-Ahzâb, 33: 72)

This was the first and the last choice that all the species in this universe made. As for man, he chose to bear the trust, because Allah has willed that man should come to Him willingly not compulsorily. Man can disbelieve, but he believes out of loving Allah; he can disobey, but he obeys out of loving Allah. Therefore, mankind and jinn are the species that prove the attribute of loving Allah for His Sake. They willingly choose to follow His Way, out of love not compulsion. Hence, they glorify the Praises of Allah, prostrate themselves to Him, exalt Him, pray to Him and invoke Him as a confession of their love to Allah, all praise and glory be to Him.

The Truth, Blessed and Exalted be He, says (what means): **"And I (Allah) created not the jinn and humans except they should worship Me (Alone)." (Az-Zâriyât, 51: 56)**. For worship to be real, it should comprise all the activities of life. In other words, all man's actions should reflect his love for Allah and every movement in life should be a vivid proof of this love. The Divine Law should be his guiding light, devotion should be his leader and no crookedness should be in the path he follows. Allah should never see him where He prohibited him, nor miss him where He ordered him to be.

True worship and how it should be?

People think that worship is only the Five Pillars of Islam, ***"Testifying that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, offering Prayer dutifully and perfectly, Paying Zakâh (Obligatory Charity), fasting Ramadan, and performing Hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca) for whoever has the means to do so."*** We say that these are the bases on which our religion is established.

Our lord has chosen Islam for us to be always with Him and not to be overtaken by Satan and in order to receive His Blessings, His Bestowments and Generosities all the time. For offering prayer after prayer gives us the power of faith that would guard us against deviation from the right path and draw us closer to Allah, be He highly blessed and exalted. The same applies to Fasting, paying the Zakâh and performing Hajj. Every act of worship amongst them is a Light from Allah, so whenever we feel languor or gloominess in the soul, we should resort to a brand from the Light of Allah that would restore our stability of faith. Same thing when your battery runs low, you connect it to a powerful electric source to get it recharged. Indeed, Islam encompasses the entire course of life, and covers every movement in it.

I do not want to get involved in a futile debate with those who say that the Pillars of Islam are just Islam; that so long you offer prayers, pay Zakâh, fast and perform Hajj, you have guaranteed that you are with Allah, so you can do as you please and leave the movement of life uncontrolled by any of the regulations dictated by faith!

I say to all those people that I shall not discuss or debate what you are saying. I will only talk about one of the Pillars (of Islam), which is offering prayers (*Al-Salat*). To perform our prayers we need some basic elements that help us stand between the Hands of Allah

The first thing we must do in order to stand between the Hands of Allah and for our prayer to be valid is to cover the private parts of our bodies. I would not say that I would need a garment or the like, just a piece of cloth to cover our private parts. This piece of cloth needs cotton; the cotton in turn needs someone to cultivate it and the cultivation needs plowing, seeds and irrigation. Seeds could be available or not. In case they were not, we must import them. In order to plow the land there must be a plow made of steel, that simple plow, which the primitive man used.

Further, we may need to search for an iron ore in mountains, which has to be melted for the plow to be made. We will also need a blacksmith to take this melted iron and shape it into a sharp tool, and then someone to bring it for us to use it. After the cotton ripen, we will need someone to harvest it, then someone to carry it to the cotton gin, then someone to take it to the cotton mill where it is spun into thread, then to the weaver who would interlace it into cloth, and then to the merchant who would sell it to us. All these stages are necessary so that I can stand in front of Allah having the private parts of my body covered for my prayer to be accepted.

Who prepares food for us?

In order to be strong to perform prayers I need what sustains me; a mouthful to eat in order to be able to bow and prostrate myself; a mouthful that strengthens me to do so. This loaf of bread that I buy from the grocery store has a long story of work behind it; beginning with the one who cultivated the wheat, to the one who grounded it into flour, to the one who kneaded it and baked it and finally to the one who brought it to the grocery store for me to buy.

We can see thus that much work is actually done in order to perform prayer. Imagine if we all remained praying in the Masjids doing nothing else, who would bring us a piece of cloth to cover our private parts and a loaf of bread to sustain ourselves? Whatever is needed to perform a certain duty is itself a duty. Therefore, worship comprises every action in this universe. So long as Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, wants man a worshipper, He wants him a worshipper in his house, a worshipper in his office, a worshipper in the Masjid and a worshipper on the road; he should be a worshipper in every step of his life. Islam exhorts to the observance of decorum, it has even set some proprieties for people to follow while being on the road.

Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has shared out His Reward on the entire movement of life, because the course of Islam comprises all this movement. Thus, He has decreed a reward for he who visits the sick, he who maintains justice in judging between people, he who treats his neighbor kindly, he who removes whatever might be harmful from the road, he who helps a disabled to cross the road, he who spends on his family, he who answers people's needs, he who puts an end to an act of injustice, he who utters kind words, he who gives a sincere advice, he who seeks to gain his living and that of his children, and he who forbids what is wrong and enjoins what is right. All that besides tens of thousands of other deeds, not included in the Pillars of Islam but cause the winning of a great reward.

When we restrict our deeds to the performance of the Five Pillars of Islam, we deprive ourselves from ninety percent of the reward that Allah has promised us for sincerity in performing the activities of life. So long as The Truth, praise be to Him, has said (what means): **"And I (Allah) created not the jinn and humans except they should worship Me (Alone)." (Az-Zâriyât, 51:65)**, then His entire Ordained Course is worship. This Course controls a believer's actions in the universe; thus, every single action is an act of worship as long as it is dedicated to the end of earning the Good Pleasure of Allah.

The Divine Law set before creation

Before Allah, all praise be to Him, created man, He established a Law for him and assigned his duty in life. As mentioned before, anyone who creates anything must first determine its purpose. As long as life is the capability of a thing to perform its duty, we must know the duty Allah has created us for. Allah, Blessed and Exalted be He, has established the Law of our life to be capable to perform the duty for whose sake we have been created.

It is real strange that the source of the world's blights is man. Because he has a free will and a reasoning power to choose between alternatives, whereas other creatures, that are made to obey Allah, cause no mischief.

They perform the role they were created for compulsorily without choice. But what ruins life and the entire universe are the matters in which man interferes with his power of choice.

Allah, Blessed and Exalted be He, wants us to follow in life the Law of our Creator, whereby we fulfill our duty exactly as the rest of the species of the universe. Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, says (what means):

"(And) if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allah and His Messenger (may Allah bless him and grant him peace)." (An-Nisâ', 4:59)

All the creatures in the universe, including inanimate beings, plants, and animals are all subjugated to perform their duty in life; that is serving man. But what is man's duty? His sole duty is to worship Allah. Allah, Blessed and Exalted be He, says in the Divine Hadith:

"O son of Adam! I have created this world for you, and created you for Myself, so do not be occupied by what is yours in place of what you are for."

What is the essence of worship? Does Allah want us just to say, *'Subhân-Allâh'* (glorified be Allah), all daylong and that is it? No, actually worshipping Allah is man's wholehearted occupation with the duty that Allah has created him for. Every move in the universe is an act of worship. We resort to the Five Pillars of Islam to charge the faith 'battery' inside us. Therefore, the meaning of 'worship,' would be obeying Allah in the entire established Divine Law.

<u>Man's duty in life</u>

All the creatures on the earth, including plants, inanimate beings and animals, are subjugated to you man, servile, obeying you in anything asked of them. Their duty in life is to serve the believer and the disbeliever, the pious and the impious until the Hour of Resurrection is established. Only then, man loses this privilege and this subjugation ends.

In worldly life, the sun does not shine on the believers only, nor does the earth gives forth its plants to the believers and withholds it from the disbelievers. The species of the earth interact for man and through him, regardless of his creed and his faith in his Lord. So, whoever succeed in adopting the means, would receive their yield, without differentiating between he who says, *'Lâ ilâha ill-Allâh'* (There is no God save Allah), and he who refuses to say it.

But in the Hereafter things would be much different. The species would serve the believer alone and would not serve the disbeliever. When the disbeliever would attempt to lie to Allah and claims that he has obeyed Him, his legs would say, 'No my Lord, he used me everyday to walk to the bar.' And his hands would say, 'No my Lord, he used me to smite the weak.' And his tongue would say, 'No my Lord, he used me to utter the word of disbelief.' Thereby, he loses all mastery even over his own body. Recite the Qur'anic verse in which Allah, says (what means):

"Till, when they reach it (Hell-fire), their hearing (ears) and their eyes, and their skins will testify against them as to what they used to do. And they will say to their skins, 'Why do you testify against us?' They will say: 'Allah has caused us to speak, as He causes all things to speak, and He created you the first time, and to Him you are made to return.'" (Fu<u>ss</u>ilat, 41: 20-21)

Thus, man’s freedom of choice and the creatures’ serviceability to him are given to all mankind in worldly life, but in the Hereafter it is for the believers only.

If the disbeliever tried to escape on the Day of Resurrection, his feet would not move; if he wanted to run away from Hellfire, his legs would drive him towards it in defiance of his will. If he wanted to drink, he would be given scalding water that would tear up his bowels; if he wanted to clothe himself, the angels of fire would cut out for him a garment from Hellfire sticking to his body.

The species of the universe would not serve the disbeliever on the Day of Resurrection, but would curse him, burn him and torture him. Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has honored man by granting him another life, a life not given through means, but is directly bestowed by Almighty Allah. A life of delights not to forsake man nor is he to leave it; a life befitting in its bestowments the believer whom Allah has vested with power in the universe; an eternal life that knows no death.

Man’s lifetime does not end by his death after worldly life. He has another life, which is the meant one. But who is to attain such life and such delights? He is the one who fulfills in this worldly life the duty that Allah has created him for. That is, obeying Allah in what to do and what not to do, such obedience that will lead man to immortality in heavenly delights.

Allah has created this world to be obeyed in it and to have all the creatures celebrating His Praises. If you joined the creatures of the universe and you became a worshipper of Allah, you would be in harmony with those glorifying species in worldly life, and then Allah, all glory be to Him, would grant you immortality in the Hereafter.

But if Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has created us to worship Him, does this mean that Allah, all glory be to Him, needs this

worship? We say, ***'With His Graceful Being, Allah stands Rich beyond need of any of His creatures. No sin will do Him the least harm, and He will profit none by any act of obedience. He has created us free to choose, then whosoever wills, let him believe, and whosoever wills, let him disbelieve. Whosoever wills, let him come to Allah willingly and not by force.'*** Allah, Whose Majesty reigns supreme, says (what means):

"If We will, We could send down to them from the heaven a sign, to which they would bend their necks in humility." (Ash-Shu'arâ', 26: 4)

The Divine Law and the work of the human mind

What did man do after Allah has made him the master of this world and subjugated to him all the species of the universe? Did he justly perceive the meaning of worldly life and hastened to practice the Divine Law? On the contrary, man abandoned the Divine Law and began passing his own laws. Consequently, misery overwhelmed the universe because of manmade laws, which people adopted instead of the Divine Law. Thus, man became miserable because he deserted the Law decreed by Allah and followed his own intellect.

Certainly, there is sharp difference between having the laws that govern your life established by The All-Knowing, The All-Wise, The Omnipotent God and having them established by a human with limited capabilities, understanding and lifetime, who knows some things and is ignorant of many others.

The Divine Laws are stable, neither change nor alter, for the One Who established them knows what would happen in the entire universe till the Last Hour is established. Nothing is unforeseen or unexpected to Him, because Allah, all glory be to Him, is the All-Knowing and comprehends everything in His Knowledge.

On the other hand, we see that manmade laws, for their deficiency, undergo many amendments and changes. Hardly a few years pass before we are surprised by the fact that the causes for which the law was established were not remedied; that new unexpected aspects have emerged. Thus, we undergo the painstaking procedure of amending the law. But those who amend the laws are also humans whose knowledge is limited. So, after a few years those laws would require amendment once more. Thus, humanity would continue to suffer the hardship of amending the laws till the Command of Allah would come to pass.

Misery in the universe stems from the fact that we do not carry out the duty for which we are created; that is worshipping Allah and adopting His Divine Law, which falsehood cannot come to it from before it or behind it, because it is sent down by The All-Wise, Worthy of all Praise.

We have forsaken the Divine Law, which is the best for us and we began to amend, moralize, and be misled by our human arrogance and belief that we are more capable of reforming the universe than Allah, all praise and glory be to Him. But we ruined everything, we wasted our life, we wasted the purpose behind it, and that is the main crime that humanity perpetrates against itself and against the right owed to its Creator.

We deviated from the purpose for which this universe, and ourselves as well, are created and our life became vain. Since we have wasted our first life, then our second life is definitely wasted, as the first life is the path ushering to the delights of the real life in the Hereafter, provided that we fulfill our duty in worldly life just as Allah has commanded us. But if we vainly wasted the first life and began moralizing depending on our fallibility, rendering what is lawful unlawful, and what is unlawful lawful, describing those who abide by the Law of Allah as old-fashioned savage people, though real

savagery is to abandon the Law of Allah. If we do so then regretfully we have indeed wasted the Hereafter too.

Life from a male and a female

When Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has created this life, He established laws for it. Among these laws, is that no life originates except from a male and a female, each of which is created independently from the other. Mankind, plants, animals and all the species on the earth are created from a male and a female, where masculinity and femininity exist independently in two creatures. Unquestionably, no creature springs from another creature, as Darwinism falsely claims. Recite the Qu'anic verse in which The Truth, all praise be to Him, says (what means):

"And of everything We have created pairs, that you may remember (the Grace of Allah)." (Az-Zâriyât, 51: 49)

There has also existed another polarity that remained unknown to us and we learned about it only recently. We have learned that in electricity there should be a positive and a negative pole for the spark to be emitted. If both poles were either negative or positive, electricity would not be produced. We have also learned that clouds are bipolar, upon joining together rain comes down. We have also learned that the atom contains positive and negative particles. Still, there exist other things we have not known yet. Surely, when Allah reveals their secrets to us we will learn that all the creatures of the universe, without exception, are from a male and a female.

But, there are two main issues that Allah has revealed His Judgment pertaining to them and ordered us not to subject them to our reasoning, nor to think about them; simply because the human intellect can never gain any knowledge regarding them. The first issue

is that you would never know how the universe was created. The second issue is that you would never how you were created.

We say to those who have their own theories concerning the beginning of creation and how the universe seemed before the beginning of life: From where did you deduce your theories and from where did you get such information? *Did you witness their creation or have there come to you of knowledge that which did not come to others?* Those who say that man evolved from an ape are surely wrong. Anyone who tackles the issue of creation and the origin of the universe is wrong no matter how many false evidences he has gathered, that do not surpass being mere conjectures and guesswork.

We summarize what we have detailed by saying that Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has created this universe to prostrate itself to Him and to celebrate His Praises, glorified be He. The entire universe obeys Allah by forced submission, but Allah, Blessed and Exalted be He, wants to be worshipped willingly, out of loving Him.

Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has established a Divine Law revealed through the sent messengers, which comprises every movement in life. Worship is not limited to offering prayers, paying the Zakah (obligatory charity), Fasting and performing Hajj, but every single movement in life is an act of worship and is a law.

Allah wants us to be active in life and populate the earth. In order, for instance, to engage in the worship of offering prayers, extensive activities have to be carried out that comprises many aspects of life. Allah, Blessed and Exalted be He, does not want us to just glorify Him night and day, but He wants us to work hard and be active. And whatever is indispensable to perform a certain duty is indeed a duty itself.

Man was mischievous on the earth by his free will. He abandoned the Divine laws and began passing his own laws. Humanity became

miserable because of manmade laws. Man has forsaken the Divine Law in order to formulate laws based on his reasoning power. He kept arguing about issues that are far beyond his mental capacity. Indeed, no matter how long we debated regarding the origin of the universe and the creation of man we would reach no truth.

That is concerning our worldly life restricted by our short lifetime. As for the life to come, the true one that would not be followed by either death or perishing, the eternal life, that would be the topic of the next chapter.

Chapter six

The Life Of The Hereafter

Before concluding our discussion about life and death, we have to talk about the Hereafter in details. This is man's real life. Worldly life is merely the abode of trial. No matter how long man stays in it, he will surely leave it at the end, and then will come man's eternal life.

This worldly life is preceded by death and is followed by death, whereas the Hereafter is preceded by death and is followed by immortality. This worldly life is a world of vicissitudes where man's state is never the same. The strong therein becomes weak, the rich becomes poor and the powerful becomes helpless.

As for life in the Hereafter, it is characterized by permanence in everything; in its pleasures, its torment, its delights, and all that it offers. Man before coming to this worldly life experienced a period of death in the immaterial existence. For man to reach the life of the Hereafter, he has to experience a death period in the *Barzakh* [the grave as the barrier or the intermediate realm that separates between this world and the other world from the time of death till the time of Resurrection] world. The *Barzakh* is the barrier between death and resurrection, between life and afterlife. After it, there would be no return to worldly life.

We have to keep in mind that everything about man, whether in the immaterial existence, the life of this world, the death world, or in the Hereafter, is chronicled in accurate records with Allah, all praise and glory be to Him. None among these phases goes haphazardly or elapses without an order or an accurate arrangement. Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, possesses an utmost accurate record of

everything He has created. No secret in this world is concealed from Him. Nothing is hidden from Him so much as the weight of an atom on the earth or in the heavens. Everything is in a Clear Book, which is the foundation of the Book, *Al-Lauh Al-Mahfûz* (The Preserved Tablet). Recite the noble Qur'anic verse in which Allah, all praise be to Him, says (what means):

"Verily, We give life to the dead, and We record that which they send before (them), and their traces [their footsteps and walking on the earth with their legs to the mosques for the five compulsory congregational prayers, Jihâd (holy fighting in the Cause of Allah) and all other good and evil they did, and that which they leave behind], and all things We have recorded with numbers (as a record) in a Clear Book." (Yâsîn, 36: 12)

For each one of us there is a preserved record kept with Allah. It encloses all the events of man's life and it would be a witness against him on the Day of Resurrection, but how would it bear witness against him? A witness against him through vivid images, as he would certainly see and hear all the events of his life exactly as they happened to him, and observe them meticulously in a way that inhibits him from denying any of them. Allah thus makes man bear witness against himself on the Day of Resurrection. Recite the noble Qur'anic verse in which Allah, Whose Majesty reigns supreme, says (what means):

"Read your book. You yourself are sufficient as a reckoner against you this Day." (Al-Isrâ', 17: 14)

This record and the registered life of each man are so accurate to extent that it resembles eyeing our selfsame worldly lives and be amazed from the accuracy of such recording, because we would find recorded in that book certain matters and details we have forgotten. Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, says concerning the accuracy of recording (what means),

“Allah has kept account of it, while they have forgotten it.” (Al-Mujâdalah, 58:6)

We would also discern the seriousness of Judgment from the accuracy of recording, that Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, misses nothing. Therefore, we have to carefully deliberate on the Qur’ânic verse in which Allah, praise be to Him, says (what means),

“They will say: ‘Woe to us! What sort of Book is this that leaves neither a small thing nor a big thing, but has recorded it with numbers!’ And they will find all that they did, placed before them, and your Lord treats no one with injustice.” (Al-Kahf, 18: 49)

Deep deliberation on this Qur’ânic verse makes us ashamed of committing any sin while knowing that it will be recorded against us and be exposed on the Day of the Great Scene in front of Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, witnessed by all the creatures.

Beyond the capacity of mind…but true indeed when it comes to the Power of Allah

Those who disbelieve in the Unseen may stop and ask themselves: Is it possible? Is it possible that each one of us would be brought from among billions of persons that lived and would still live on earth since the beginning of creation till the establishment of the Last Hour? Is it possible that each one of us would be brought with our very selfsame being although the earth consumes our bodies and erases it leaving nothing whatsoever of man?

We reply by saying that when we talk about the Power of Allah, we never talk in terms of reason. That is because Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, is beyond the capacity of mind. There is nothing

whatsoever like unto Him. All His Divine Attributes and Power are likewise beyond man's grasp of intellect. But surely every one of us is created with an accurate balance so exact that is never upset nor lost.

Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, being merciful to our minds, revealed to us some of the secrets He has placed in this universe that may approximate to our minds the prodigious matters of the Unseen, in order not to go astray, nor fall into distress.

Originally, man is created from a sperm and all mankind were brought forth from the loin of Adam (peace be upon him). This sperm is so minute that it cannot be seen with the naked eye. To perceive how accurate the process of creation is, it suffices to imagine that all mankind – since the creation of Adam till the Day of Resurrection – existed in the loin of Adam. That was the beginning. Every sperm represents a human's life, on which his entire life is written with a highly accurate code: his age, his lifetime, and all the events that will happen to him, whether a male or a female, whether miserable or happy and all other things.

If we were made to know this code, take it, and then input it in a computer to solve its riddles we would be faced in minuets with a human's figure, his gender, and the story of his whole life. Although such a scientific fact has started to be known to us only recently, it existed since the creation of Adam. But Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has not willed to reveal some of its secrets except at the present time.

This sperm chosen with utmost accuracy is emitted, enters the womb, fertilizes the egg, and causes pregnancy. The code continues to output what has been recorded in it till the time of death is due then it stops.

The record is never lost

This is the only record that is never erased, lost, or obliterated. When Allah resurrects people on the Day of Resurrection, He will say to this sperm, “Be!” so the code is deciphered and all what is written on it is fulfilled and comes the very selfsame man.

Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, draws our attention to the fact that Resurrection is the bringing back of creation, not a new creation. Allah, Whose Majesty reigns supreme, says (what means),

“Then, they will say: ‘Who shall bring us back (to life)?’ Say: ‘He Who created you first!’ Then, they will shake their heads at you and say: ‘When will that be?’ Say: ‘Perhaps it is near!’” (Al-Isrâ’, 17: 51)

Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, will order those sperms present on the earth to return creatures as before, and they will comply. The only difference will be the time, because in the Hereafter there is no time. What takes place during worldly life in thirty, forty, fifty years, or more or less, will happen in a second. This is the only difference. Other than that, Resurrection is a bringing back of a creation that already existed. Although mankind is alike in appearance, physical structure and characteristics, you will never find two typically identical persons. Two persons will never be totally identical in every thing from the time of Adam (peace be upon him) till the Last Hour is established, though we are almost repeated duplicates.

Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, being merciful to our minds, gave us the clue to this in many things. Take for an instance the fingerprint; although our hands are similar, the fingerprint of each one of us is different from that of the other. It is also true between the fingers of the same hand. I believe that this is an undeniable fact and an acquired worldly knowledge whose miracles are unfolded with the passage of time. In every age the Noble Qur’ân offers special bestowments, which are not brought about by coincidence. Allah,

Blessed and Exalted be He, has called our attention to it in the Noble Qur'ân through the verse saying (what means):

"Does man (a disbeliever) think that We shall not assemble his bones? Yes, We are Able to put together in perfect order the tips of his fingers." (Al-Qiyâmah, 75: 3-4)

This means that the Power of Allah, Blessed and Exalted be He, does not lie only in assembling the bones, which had dissolved and turned into dust, but His Power is far beyond that. With His infinite Power, The Almighty put together the fingertips and fingerprints, which distinguishes a human from another since the time of Adam (peace be upon him) till the Day of Resurrection.

Modern science has proven, as Allah has already revealed to us, that just as fingers have a unique print, the body has also its print, its scent that distinguishes a human from the rest of his race. It is identified by trained dogs that have a very sensitive sense of smell. Man has also a voiceprint, tooth print, and other distinctive features. In fact every body has its own code identified by all the members of the one body in a manner that never allows the mingling of a single body with another.

We come across this fact in organ and skin transplantations. Every body perfectly knows its organs and tissues. So, if man is injured, you find the skin coalescing and weaving a new tissue to replace the cut and close it. Similarly, if any bodily organ is afflicted with a microbe, the whole body is united to fight this microbe till it destroys it. But what happens if we placed an organ or a tissue taken from another person? Immediately the body identifies it, knows that it is not its own and starts fighting this foreign intruder till it expels it, even if this organ is taken from the man's brother, son, or daughter; in other words, is of the same origin. This proves to us that each body has its unique code.

Perhaps the surgeons who perform transplanting operations are the people most familiar with this fact. Each day they are faced with similar cases, a mother's body rejecting the daughter's kidney, a father's body not accepting the son's skin tissues. Then it is not a matter of kinship or origin, but every body has its own code that does not agree with that of another body. Verily, the Work of Allah, Who perfected all things.

Proving Resurrection with tangible evidences

Faced with all these evidences that approximate to the mind how each human being is a none recurrent image of the others, and how he is distinguished by special attributes that characterize him alone, inscribed with a special code on the sperm, which is the commencement of bringing man from the immaterial existence or the death world to the worldly life in order to perform his duty, we learn for sure that recreation is easier than starting it. Although there is nothing deemed easy or difficult on Almighty Allah, for He just says to a thing: 'Be!' and it is. But we mention this because recreation of an existent, for us, is easier than bringing it into being. In order to clarify this meaning to us, Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, says in the Noble Qur'an (what means):

"And He it is Who originates the creation, then will repeat it (after it has been perished), and this is easier for Him. His is the highest description (i.e. none has the right to be worshipped but He, and there is nothing comparable unto Him) in the heavens and in the earth. And He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise." (Ar--Rûm, 30: 27)

Moving from one phase to the other in our journey towards eternal life does not occur except with the Power of Allah, all praise and glory be

to Him, Alone. Rising from our graves does not signify the beginning of the afterlife, rather it is rising to face the Day of Judgment; the Day when all people would be resurrected from the graves they were buried inside. They would all come forth by the same word that was said to the sperm 'Be'. For as the sperm was surrounded in the immaterial existence by the signs of death, till Almighty Allah permitted it to come to life by the word 'Be,' and life was breathed into it so as to perform what is fated for it, from conception, birth, childhood, till finally reaching the predestined age of death. The same applies to the Hour of Resurrection, when it would be said to the sperm 'Be,' and people would start rising from their graves, but the question is how they would come forth?

Would man keep on trying to get out, and keep removing the soil above him to get out? Never, for the land would split asunder for him by the Command of Allah, all praise and glory be to Him. Recite the noble Qur'anic verse in which Allah, all praise be to Him, says (what means):

"On the Day when the earth shall be cleft, from off them, (they will come out) hastening forth. That will be a gathering, quite easy for Us." (Qâf, 50: 44)

But why Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has called it *Hashir* 'crowding or gathering'? Because all who were engraved within the earth would come forth of it, although they were not buried all at the same time, but they were buried throughout many centuries and their parts were scattered in distant places after turning into dust. They would all come forth in the same breath, and the earth would be crammed with them. Therefore, Allah has called it the Day of Crowding, because the overcrowding would be so intense.

Imagine a land like Egypt for instance; many dead people were interred in it throughout so many centuries, and all of a sudden these

dead people would come out in the same breath. Indeed, what a horrible great crowd and what a frightful day!

In America someone once asked me where does the soul go after death? I answered him saying, 'To where it was before it came to life,' and then another asked how all the events of the universe are recorded? I told him that it is not just recorded, but are predestined by Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, before they occur. And this is a proof of the Divine Omnipotence and the Perfection of Allah's Knowledge. Each deed and event happens according to the Decree of Allah. Recite the noble Qur'anic verse in which Allah, all praise be to Him, says (what means):

"No calamity befalls on the earth or in yourselves but is inscribed in the Book of Decrees (Al-Lauh Al-Mahfûz), before We bring it into existence. Verily, that is easy for Allah.") Al-Hadîd, 57: 22)

Such recording is so accurate to the extent that the eyes of a murdered victim record in its iris the image of the killer, and if we succeeded to reach the iris of the murdered victim, we would be able to see the image of the killer. Indeed, everything is recorded and has its substantiating proof.

Before Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, created life, He created death. When man is born the angel of death goes out in search for him. The age of man is the time it takes the angel of death to find him, and when they meet it is the moment of death.

Paradise

Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has created many things especially for the afterlife, even if they are invisible to us. If in Paradise there is what an eye has never seen, nor an ear has ever heard of, nor ever crossed the mind of a human soul, it is thus difficult to

express life in Paradise by words, for the image must first exist in the human mind, and then one can choose the suitable words to express it. Before inventing the television for example, this word had no existence in any of the languages, but when it was invented and became a tangible reality, the linguistics chose for it this name

When Allah, Blessed and Exalted be He, describes life in Paradise for us, He says (what means), ***'The likeness of (this) worldly life',*** thus it is not life itself, but just a simile whereby He approximates it to the mind by something known. When someone wants to communicate to the mind an unknown thing, he likens it to something familiar so that the hearer can understand. As when trying to inform someone that the earth is round shaped, you bring him a map of the earth drawn on a ball, and tell him that the earth is similar to this ball.

When the inhabitants of Paradise would enter it, things would seem similar to them; they would imagine that the fruits are akin to those with which they were provided before in worldly life, but in reality they are certainly different. Allah, The Most Exalted, would command them to eat them and they would find them totally different from what they had in worldly life. Thus, all the descriptions that Allah gives for life in Paradise, is an attempt to approximate the meaning to the human mind, so that man can envisage how it would be. It is enough to know that in Paradise one obtains whatever it occurs to his mind by the mere thinking of it, which is something none can attain in worldly life.

Once I was visiting the United States, when they took me to a hotel where the kings usually stay; they wanted to fascinate me with the scientific progress, where everything in the room is prepared for accommodation. Just by pressing a button you get a cup of coffee, and by pressing another you get a cup of tea, food or the like. When they asked me my opinion, I told them that if such were manmade luxury, just imagine how much the more the Lord of mankind has prepared for us?

In Paradise, when man dreams of something he finds it before him; all what man wishes for is fulfilled, and Allah has ever more than what any heart can crave for, therefore The Truth, all praise be to Him, says (what means):

“There they will have all that they desire, and We have more (for them, i.e. a glance at the All-Mighty, the All-Majestic).”(Qâf, 50: 35)

Meaning that Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, grants man in Paradise all what he wishes, and whatever the mind can dream of, and then there would be more and more. Yes indeed! The ultimate happiness and ecstasy will be seeing Allah on the Day of Resurrection. This is the greatest blessing, which any man can attain in this universe. When man sees Allah, he will wish for no other delights, nor desire anything more than enjoying the pleasure of looking at Allah, all praise and glory be to Him. The Truth, Whose Majesty reigns supreme, says in the Noble Qur’an (what means):

“Some faces that Day shall be *Nâdirah* (shining and radiant). Looking at their Lord (Allah).”(Al-Qiyâmah, 75: 22-23)

The worst punishment that can befall a man on the Day of Resurrection is to be deprived from seeing Allah, neither will Allah look at him, nor speak to him. Indeed, an intolerable punishment afflicted on the dwellers of the Hellfire. The Truth, Blessed and Exalted be He, says about the denizens of Hellfire (what means):

“Neither will Allah speak to them, nor look at them on the Day of Resurrection.”(Âl-‘Imrân, 3: 77)

And Allah, Whose Majesty reigns supreme, says (what means):

“Nay! Surely, they (evil-doers) will be veiled from seeing their Lord that Day.”(Al-Muṯaffifîn, 83: 15)

We have to understand that in the life of Paradise or Hell, the structure of our bodies will change in a way that shifts them from mortality to immortality, and helps make the body cope with the new conditions of the life it shall live. Thus, the body structure of the inhabitants of Paradise will change to suit life in Paradise, enabling them to see Allah, talk to Him and listen to Him. As for the inhabitants of Hellfire, we seek the Refuge of Allah from such an end, the time the skin of their bodies gets burned, it will be renewed and revived once more, so that they feel the pain and torment, for the sensory nerves exist directly beneath the skin, as science has discovered just recently. Allah, Blessed and Exalted be He, says (what means):

“Surely! Those who disbelieved in Our *Ayât* (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) We shall burn them in Fire. As often as their skins are roasted through, We shall change them for other skins that they may taste the punishment. Truly, Allah is Ever Most Powerful, All-Wise.*” (*An-Nisâ’, 4:56)

Thus, we see that all of us will be endowed with a new creation, so that Allah, Blessed and Exalted be He, may grant us the fruits of our deeds in worldly life, and grant us the eternal life that suits the human being whom Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has honored and created the whole universe for his sake. This is the true life that Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, wants for us. As for the inhabitants of Hellfire, we seek the Refuge of Allah from such an end, they only enjoyed themselves in this worldly life a little, and they incurred upon themselves an eternal torture in the Hereafter. They have ruined themselves by disobeying Allah, all praise and glory be to Him. They have wasted the real life that Allah, Whose Majesty reigns supreme, has prepared for them.

Here we reach the end of this discussion, hoping that Allah, all praise and glory be to Him, has guided me to what He loves and may earn His Good Pleasure, and I beg The Most Exalted, that this book serves as guidance to all those who reads it, and ushers them to the true life in Paradise, verily He is the All-Hearer, the One Who answers the prayers.